

USA

Aspects of
political
and
social
life





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and social life***



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Vorbemerkung

Das Gebiet "Landeskunde USA" ist ein wesentlicher Bestandteil der Ausbildung der Englischlehrer an den Hochschulen der DDR. Diese Disziplin hat die Aufgabe, den Studenten Kenntnisse über die politischen und sozialen Verhältnisse in den USA, über die Wirkungsmechanismen in der Klassengesellschaft unter den Bedingungen des staatsmonopolistischen Kapitalismus sowie über die fortschrittlichen Kräfte in diesem Land zu vermitteln.

Wir betrachten den vorliegenden Band als einen Beitrag zur Weiterentwicklung des Lehrgebietes der Landeskunde an den Hochschulen der DDR. Darüber hinaus soll er auch breitere Leserkreise mit wichtigen ökonomischen und politischen Problemen in den USA bekanntmachen.

Das Buch kann nicht alle Themen berücksichtigen, die unter der genannten Aufgabenstellung zu behandeln wären. Im allgemeinen geben die Beiträge den Stand vom Ende der 70er Jahre wieder; nichtsdestoweniger werden sie den Leser befähigen, auf dieser Grundlage weiterführende Entwicklungen selbständig zu erkennen und einzuordnen. Das vorliegende Werk wurde von Lehrkräften, die an verschiedenen Hochschulen der DDR in der Lehrerbildung tätig sind, erarbeitet; einige Beiträge wurden von Wissenschaftlern aus anderen Bereichen beigesteuert.

Wir danken allen Institutionen und Kollegen, die unter großen Opfern an Zeit und Kraft geholfen haben, wie auch denjenigen, die als Muttersprachler bei der Herstellung der englischen Fassung mitwirkten. Insbesondere sei Herrn Dr. Leonard A. Jones von der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg gedankt, der unermüdlich an der Endredaktion mitarbeitete. Dank gebührt auch dem Verlag für stets interessierte Förderung unseres Vorhabens.

Wir sind uns der Tatsache bewußt, daß das vorgelegte Buch in mancherlei Hinsicht verbessert und ergänzt werden kann, und wir bitten alle Benutzer um entsprechende Hinweise.

Halle, im Dezember 1978

Dorothea Siegmund-Schultze

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The Foreign Policy of the USA

Global Strategy – Content and Origin

The expression “global strategy” characterises the foreign policy pursued by US monopoly capitalism since the second world war. It comprises its general strategic aims, but also the political, ideological, military and economic tactics employed against the forces of socialism, the national liberation movements and the working classes in the capitalist countries. Thus the USA pursues in all kinds of variations a worldwide strategy of intervention and counter-revolution against all socialist and anti-imperialist forces.

The second world war and its consequences ushered in the second stage of the general crisis of imperialism. The victory of the Soviet Union over the fascist aggressors and the emergence of a world socialist system resulted in a qualitative change in the relationship of forces between socialism and imperialism. In addition to the general weakening of imperialism the law of uneven political and economic development of capitalism resulted in a change in the relationship of forces among the imperialist countries to the advantage at first of the USA, which took over the role of the leading imperialist power in the non-socialist world. Here it did not demand a “simple redivision” of the world but undisputed mastery, even at the risk of a third world war.

The USA had two main strategic aims. One was to exploit the weakened state of the other imperialist countries in order to establish its undisputed hegemony in the imperialist camp economically, militarily, politically and ideologically. The achievement of this aim was intended to create favourable conditions for realising the second aim, the most important one of destroying the world socialist system.

The official basis of US strategy was the Truman Doctrine proclaimed in a message of the President to Congress of March 12, 1947. This doctrine was the basis of the cold war and was further intended to provide a justification for the extended definition of the USA’s “national security”.

The Truman doctrine put forward:

1. the thesis of the “communist threat” whereby Congress was pressured into sanctioning the foreign policy measures of the Administration; it used
2. economic and military instruments in foreign policy in order to support or bring to power, governments “acceptable” to the USA; it propagated
3. an aggressive expansionism to maintain “international stability” as it understood it, i. e. a “pax americana”, and it was consciously
4. a strategy of global intervention.

Its first "test" was the intervention against the Greek liberation movement, coupled with unasked-for "military aid" for Turkey. By maintaining that in the event of a victory by the democratic forces in Greece or Turkey after the withdrawal of the British intervention forces one European country after the other would fall to "communism", the so-called "domino-theory" was developed, which later played an important part in the USA's strategy in Asia. Today it is sometimes applied in Europe as an excuse for the stationing of US troops there. Thus the former NATO Commander-in-Chief, General Goodpaster, told Congress in 1973 that without NATO the West would be hopelessly exposed to Soviet pressure and any Soviet attempt to take over one country after another, as well as to the danger of instability and a possible war. The USA's aggressive foreign policy in the post-war period culminated in the conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact, a new version of the Anti-Comintern Pact of the defeated fascist aggressors. With the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), undisguisedly directed against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, the USA wanted at the same time to secure for itself for ever hegemony over the countries of W. Europe. The foundation of NATO dealt the final blow to the anti-Hitler coalition. The USA not only launched a general attack upon the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, but began comprehensive preparations for a third world war against the socialist countries. NATO became the core of the global system of imperialist pacts. The USA concluded bilateral "defence agreements" with 42 countries and agreed to assist 30 more.

The regional centres can be seen from the four great multilateral pacts:

- the Rio Pact (Inter-American Treaty of Mutual Assistance) with 19 Latin American countries, re-formed as the Organisation of American States in Bogota in 1948;
- NATO, with the signatory states: USA, Canada, Britain, France, the Benelux countries, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Portugal. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952 and the FRG in 1955. France left the military organisation in 1966 and Greece in 1974 but did not relinquish their membership of the pact. With the Madrid Pact of 1953 between the USA and Spain, which gave its agreements to the establishment of military bases on Spanish territory, the latter country also belongs indirectly to NATO;
- The ANZUS Pact of 1951 between Australia, New Zealand and the USA, and
- the SEATO Pact (South-East Asia Treaty Organisation) with eight signatory states: the USA, Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand, and only three Asian countries, Thailand, Pakistan and the Philippines. South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were declared a "protected area".

In addition the USA is an observer in the CENTO (Central Treaty Organisation) Pact, whose members are Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Britain: CENTO succeeded the original Bagdad Pact after the withdrawal of Iraq in 1955. In

addition to its ties with Israel the USA has similar "security agreements" with Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, and has economic and military influence in Jordan. Of considerable significance was the "security pact" with Japan of 1951, a country intended by the USA to undertake "tasks of order and security" in Asia by virtue of its economic strength and strategic position, especially since SEATO failed to become an Asiatic NATO and fell to pieces. With Japan the USA wanted to erect a bulwark against Communism, i. e. against social changes in Asia, which is greatly dependent on the USA.

The main theoretical line of this policy was the doctrine of "containment of communism" in all parts of the world. On this basis the USA waged the war in Korea (1950-53), supported the French colonial war in Indochina (1946-54) and particularly in Europe pressed forward with the re-creation of an imperialist German state by dividing Germany, the remilitarisation of W. Germany and its eventual inclusion in NATO. An attempt was made to justify this aggressive, anti-socialist policy by anti-communist propaganda. The demand was made for a "consolidated front" of all capitalist forces under the leadership of the USA to carry out a global policy against Communism. The USA here referred back to its own so-called "Manifest Destiny", conceived in the 19th century, i. e. the belief in a historical mission imposed upon the Americans as a "chosen people". Originally this had served to justify an aggressive policy of US expansion on the American continent, and was later the foundation of US imperialist aggression.¹

Thus John Foster Dulles, then US Secretary of State, called communism "the tools of the Antichrist". Thus anti-communism became a "Christian" duty and any criticism of this attitude was branded as an attack upon the American way of life. Dulles vilified those countries pursuing a policy of neutrality as "immoral".²

It is thus important to point to the close connection between religion and politics in American foreign policy, which disguises US imperialism with mystical and emotionally-laden appeals intended to justify the existing property relationships of the ruling class and to serve the cause of aggression.

Effects of the 3rd Stage of the General Crisis on the Strategy of US Imperialism

In the second half of the 50s imperialism entered the third phase of its general crisis. This was marked by the growth and consolidation of the world socialist system, the collapse of the imperialist colonial system and the deepening of the contradictions between the imperialist countries. This meant that the anticommunist objectives of the "policy of strength" and the cold war of US foreign policy had less chance of being implemented, although the USA still retained relatively strong economic, political and military positions. By October 4, 1957, when the Soviet Union launched the first sputnik, it was obvious that the policy of strength and the cold war had not met with success. The former US Secretary

of the Air Force, Finletter, then said that he knew of no other event since the Russian Revolution in 1917 which had so deeply shaken the security and strength of the USA.

In the 3rd stage of its general crisis the situation of imperialism as a whole and of US imperialism in particular was made more difficult by the foreign policy of the socialist states and the new role played by the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America in international affairs. The result has been a serious diminishing of imperialist spheres of supremacy. The struggle of the two systems has exerted greater pressure on imperialism and compelled it to accommodate itself to a principally new historical situation. By means of state monopoly capitalism, imperialism is now trying to achieve three mutually related aims:

1. concentration of its economic, ideological and military potential, in order to maintain its weakened position and to achieve some success in the field of economic competition and scientific and technological progress;
2. overcoming the consequences of the collapse of the imperialist colonial system: compensating for the losses involved in it and preventing a non-capitalist road of development for the former colonies;
3. consolidating its weakened domestic position, to counter any serious upsurge in the working class movement, to gain material resources for a policy of social manoeuvre, and perfect the machinery for the propagation of bourgeois ideology.

The ruling class of the USA was compelled—in a contradictory process which has not yet been concluded—to reassess its foreign policy. The main concern was formulating and applying a new strategy which would enable it to avoid a direct nuclear confrontation while at the same time permitting intensified rearmament, as well as putting a brake on the revolutionary development of the world socialist system and the national liberation movement. The controversies developing within the American monopoly bourgeoisie about a new conception of foreign policy strategy were an open admission of the fact that under the conditions of the existence of a permanent world socialist system and its growth in political, military and economic power total war could only end with the total defeat of the aggressor. The leading forces of US imperialism were confronted with the fact that the premises on which the policy of world hegemony after the second world war had been based, namely

- a) the monopoly of atomic weapons, which was to guarantee “absolute power”;
- b) the absolute ability of transporting these weapons (long range bombers and aircraft-carriers) and
- c) a “monopoly” in invulnerability

no longer existed.

Thus discussion centred on the necessity of a flexible strategy to offset the bankruptcy of the policy of “strength”. In this connection an important part was

played by the "Rockefeller Reports" that appeared between 1958 and 1961. These reports exemplified the contradictions in the strategic thinking of the American monopoly bourgeoisie. On the one hand it had to give up the illusion and to recognize that the USA was no longer in a position to determine decisively the process of development in world politics. On the other hand it refused to abandon its basic anti-communist position.

In view of the real relationship of forces in the world the authors of the reports were well aware that the anti-communist aims of US foreign policy could not be achieved "at one stroke", i. e. with a total war against the world socialist system. The reports formulated a line of "flexible response", which, in addition to the continuation of the arms race and preparations for an atomic war, sees important instruments of foreign policy in "limited wars", in the increased use of economic measures to promote an anti-socialist and neo-colonialist policy and in intensified subversion and psychological warfare.

When in 1961 the USA substituted the doctrine of "flexible response" for that of "containment" and "liberation", it in no way abandoned its basic aggressive anti-communist aims. The foreign policy of the USA in the 60s reflected the historical defensive position of imperialism as a whole, while simultaneously exploiting certain specific features of the international situation, namely,

- differences of opinion in the world socialist system connected with the harmful position taken up by Maoism;
- changes in the relationship of forces within imperialism (weakening of the economic position of the USA as compared with W. Europe and Japan, which forced an increased flexibility on the USA);
- processes in the developing countries (discrepancy between the national incomes of the industrialised capitalist countries and those of the developing countries, rapid growth of population, hunger, increased social differentiation, instability of political regimes). The result was direct intervention to prop up reactionary regimes, conspiracies, putschs, the involvement of certain countries in military blocks and groupings, etc.;
- political crises arising in various areas (e. g. India-Pakistan), clashes among African countries, territorial conflicts, etc.

In every case the USA tried to feather its own nest and split the unity of the anti-imperialist forces.

In trying to decide how the USA could parry setbacks in its foreign policy and even transform them into offensives, three main trends were evident in the US bourgeoisie, which often overlapped. One group that came to the fore demanded a return to the bankrupt Dulles policy based on "a position of strength". This grouping largely supported the election of the Republican Nixon as President of the USA, but also to some extent backed the candidacy of the fascist Wallace. These forces had a secure basis in the military apparatus of the USA, especially in the Pentagon and the research centres associated with it such as the RAND and Hudson Institutes, and in the American war-industry. What made this

grouping particularly dangerous was that its refusal to recognize realities was to be implemented by sabotaging détente and even resorting to war, if necessary with nuclear weapons.

On the other side stood a numerically much smaller group of the American monopoly bourgeoisie, which assessed more realistically the world situation and the strength of the socialist countries and tried to limit to some extent the objectives of American globalism. It demanded a more realistic foreign policy called "selective globalism". It criticised the USA for making the mistake of trying to play the policeman of the world at too many points of the non-socialist part of the world at the same time. They demanded a selection of those countries in which the USA could intervene and a concentration of its forces on the main targets within the world socialist system and the national liberation movements. This conception would in no sense allow an anti-socialist policy to be deflected from Europe as the main scene of struggle.

A third trend between these two was that represented by the policy of President Johnson. Its chief feature was the eclecticism with which it chose what it wanted from the ideas of both wings of the American monopoly bourgeoisie. The Johnson Administration escalated its policy of intervention and aggression which plunged the USA into further defeats and aggravated the crisis in American foreign policy. The result was Johnson's personal defeat in 1968.

This crisis of US "global strategy" forced many monopoly circles not directly concerned with the armaments industry and some whose main foreign investments were in "crisis" areas, to attempt to find new variations in foreign policy strategy in the direction of economic and ideological warfare. A reduction of the US involvement in "limited wars" and a "flexible softening-up policy" against the socialist countries was demanded, a policy which was nevertheless regarded as the "strategic preparation" for a possible subsequent direct "hard confrontation". To achieve an "erosion" of the strength of the socialist community of states, hopes have been placed on the infiltration of counter-revolutionary elements, on the development of revisionist and nationalist forces in various socialist countries and on the encouragement of anti-Soviet divisive forces. Thus for years the USA has made use of the anti-socialist and greatpower chauvinism of the Mao group in China as a weapon in its strategy of anti-Sovietism.

Parallel to subversive aggression against the socialist countries, the USA has developed an interventionist neocolonialism consisting of mobilising national capitalist forces against the revolutionary movements in former colonies. The doctrine of "flexible response", officially approved in 1961, included the calculated employment of strength corresponding with the requirements of global strategic aims. It comprised "limited" wars and subversive operations of all kinds, aimed at preventing social and political changes in various parts of the world, passing over to the offensive whenever possible, "probing" the socialist camp and the young national states and discovering or creating weak links in the chain.

American global strategy was unable to stop the popular democratic revolutions

in Europe and Asia, it had finally to accept the collapse of the old colonial empires and in the sixties it could neither strangle the revolution in Cuba nor avert the victory of the peoples of Indochina in their struggle for liberation. None of the endeavours undertaken during the cold war and lasting for many years, and no antisocialist embargo on trade brought US imperialism any significant success. Every counter-revolutionary blow aimed at socialist state power in various countries such as occurred in 1956 in Hungary ("liberation") and in 1968 in Czechoslovakia ("bridges to the East") was frustrated by the power of socialist internationalism.

Crisis and Failure of Post-War Strategy

In his period of office from 1965 to 1968 President Johnson addressed himself to tasks which no statesman in the service of US monopoly capitalism had ever been able to solve. They proved insoluble because they exceeded the potentialities of US monopoly capital and ignored the actual relationship of forces in the world, not to speak of the objective laws of the world revolutionary process.

US foreign policy was based on the hope of maintaining a "constant superiority" over the Soviet Union in military strength and economic growth based on the still greater capacities in some spheres of economic development.

The growth in defensive power of the Soviet Union and the whole community of socialist countries frustrated the plans of those US circles who thought they could use military force, or the threat of it, against the socialist states with impunity. Faced with a crisis in home and foreign policy and the growing activities of social forces opposed to the policy of strength, certain circles within the American ruling class began to adapt themselves to the changed conditions. The new phase in the sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism at the beginning of the 70s was reflected in the foreign policy crisis which compelled imperialism to throw overboard many military and political doctrines aimed at an armed suppression of socialism. The results of Soviet-American negotiations from 1972 onwards, the system of agreements and treaties between socialist and capitalist states in Europe directed towards the normalisation of relations on the basis of mutual advantage, the defeat of US aggression in Vietnam, the successful conclusion of the Helsinki Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe—these and many other events of international importance were clear signs of the changes in the relationship of forces in favour of socialism.

Of greatest significance is the change in Soviet-American relations. For the first time the Soviet Union succeeded in creating a stable basis for the long-term development of these relations. Great significance must also be attached to the political and military defeat of the greatest imperialist military power in the war of aggression against the people of Vietnam. This defeat demonstrated unmistakably that the chances open to US imperialism of successfully waging wars to suppress the legitimate rights of nations were dwindling away. The

serious effects of the war in Indochina upon the internal political situation in the USA increased the necessity for adapting foreign policy to the new relationship of forces. In the joint document of May 29, 1972 on the "Basis of Relations between the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the United States of America" the very important statement is made "that in this atomic age there is no other basis for the maintenance of relations between them than peaceful co-existence". Since the USA had to recognise that its relations with the USSR had to be based on the principles of sovereignty, equality, non-interference in its internal affairs and mutual advantage, the conditions were created for a qualitatively new level of a bilateral relationship. It became essential to get the administration to stand by the agreements concluded. Peaceful co-existence, however, can only be secured in hard class struggle and since US imperialism remains a strong and dangerous adversary, as is clear from the events in Chile, Uruguay, Cyprus, the Middle East and Africa, the greatest vigilance against the export of counter-revolution continues to be on the order of the day.

The changes noted in the balance of forces and the spreading crisis of the state monopoly system in the USA have forced the ruling circles of the country to adapt their foreign, military and foreign trade policies to the new external and internal conditions of existence of US imperialism. This process however takes place in an extremely contradictory manner and is intensifying the political differentiation within the US monopoly bourgeoisie and its leading groups. The following two problems continue to further this process of differentiation:

- how to shape relations with the socialist states, especially the USSR, in conditions of the loss of "strategic superiority" in the military sphere;
- how to deal with the effects of the changed international position of US imperialism and the crisis of the state monopoly system so as to reshape "national priorities".

After the military power of the USSR had led to the USA's loss of strategic superiority, leading circles in the USA gradually came to realise that they had to modify their policy towards the Soviet Union and the other socialist states. In particular they began to reassess the importance of military means in dealing with socialism. The fact that a nuclear war would jeopardise the very existence of their own social system and that escalating the arms race, especially in the atomic field, was weakening the inner stability of the USA and its position on the capitalist world market, encouraged the readiness of the Nixon Administration to agree to important negotiations for the prevention of a nuclear war and for the limitation of strategic arms. Here, in addition to the 1972 agreement on the limitation of rocket defence systems and the temporary agreement on the limitation of strategic offensive weapons, special importance must be attached to the treaty concluded in 1973 between the USSR and the USA on the prevention of a nuclear war—the most important document signed by the USSR and the USA for securing peace since the Potsdam Agreement. The strongest imperialist power was now contractually obliged to reject the threat and use of force and

to co-operate with the USSR in a field so important for the future of mankind as the prevention of a nuclear war. With this and other agreements with the USA the Soviet Union upheld the basic interests of the working class and the peoples generally and gave expression to the inseparable connection between peace and socialism. The Nixon Administration achieved a breakthrough for those circles of the US monopoly bourgeoisie who saw that détente was the only long-term basis for carrying on the fight against socialism and stabilising their own system. This policy, followed in essence by the Ford Administration, was especially supported by those monopoly groups which very largely draw their profits from overseas investments, have an important share of their turnover in foreign markets and thus require the necessary guarantees for this from the national foreign policy.

The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration

The election of James Carter as President and his assumption of office in January 1977 marked a renewed turn to unrealistic aims in foreign policy. The aim of the new administration has been to develop a foreign policy strategy which would guarantee maintaining the general anti-communist direction under US leadership despite the changed balance of forces in the world but attempting at the same time to overcome the historically determined defensive position of imperialism.

Thus intensified confrontation and "limited co-operation" have become the most important basic features of US foreign policy in the struggle of US imperialism against the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community. The Carter Administration further seeks to effect a concentration, accelerated development and co-ordinated use of the military, political, economic and ideological potentialities of all three centres of the imperialist system (USA, W. Europe and Japan), of course under US leadership; the aim is to tip the international balance of forces to the better advantage of imperialism, to counter the growth of the anti-imperialist forces, led by the Communist Parties, in W. Europe and Japan and to drive back the influence of socialism on the shaping of international relations.

By means of combining an intensified neo-colonialism with a flexible policy of compromise towards the young national states, imperialism aims at encouraging pro-capitalist processes, heading off revolutionary changes in the direction of socialism and disrupting friendly relations between these countries and the USSR and other socialist states. Ruling circles in the USA seek to turn the developing countries into a strategic reserve of imperialism in the world-wide class struggle and to secure for the monopolies access to the resources of raw materials and energy in these countries.

Under the Carter Administration there are unmistakeable signs of a growth in the influence of reactionary forces on foreign policy. Under the pressure of

influential enemies of détente inside and outside the executive the Administration has revived the policy of confrontation with the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community. Reviving once more the lie of the "threat from the East" and adopting the slogan "peace through strength", reactionary forces have gathered around and behind Carter to put a brake on the international process of détente and develop an imperialist counter-strategy to peaceful co-existence. Thus the USA plays a leading part in the attempts of the NATO countries to evade their responsibilities for implementing the Final Act of Helsinki, to replace the principle of non-interference by that of interference and to pursue a "cold war" policy of confrontation.

The massive attacks upon the policy of détente by its enemies have also led to a shift of accent in the USA's military strategy. Despite official adherence to the policy of avoiding a global nuclear war or a war involving their own country, leading US circles have set themselves the aim of achieving a gradual shift in the balance of military power in favour of imperialism. They aim at making the whole system of military alliances centred on NATO more effective and at extending it by the direct or indirect involvement of other countries, to form a network of bi- and multilateral alliances covering the whole non-socialist world. The "tri-lateral commission" of the USA, W. Europe and Japan under US hegemony would form the core of this whole system of alliances.

The Carter Administration has so far also pursued a policy of influencing negatively the international climate by carrying over ideological forms of class struggle on to the international arena. Driven on by right-wing forces it has followed a dangerous policy of blocking the SALT-II-talks, which are decisive for the development of Soviet-US relations, of turning the Belgrade follow-up conference of the Helsinki CSCE into an instrument of interference in the internal affairs of socialist countries, of impeding progress in the Vienna negotiations on the reduction of troops and armaments in Central Europe. This policy has led to a deterioration and stagnation in American-Soviet relations. The USSR is countering this policy with a principled and constructive firmness.

The more the progressive forces succeed in driving back the aggressive forces of the USA and other imperialist powers, carrying through effective measures for a cessation of the arms race, securing disarmament, the more can détente be extended and deepened and world peace and international security be consolidated.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Cf., e.g., *Rostow, W. W.*, *View from the Seventh Floor*, New York 1964, p. 53.
- 2) Cf. *Sasel, A. A.*, *America's World Role in the 70s*, 1970, p. 2.

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The Legislature of the USA

In the course of the War of Independence leading politicians of the 13 British colonies in America worked out the shape of the future US government in the Articles of Confederation of 1776/77. According to this first American constitution the federal government of the USA was to consist only of a more or less strictly legislative central organ—a unicameral Congress. Each of the future states was to send a delegation of a strength corresponding with its size and population but with only one vote per state delegation. So the principle of equality of all the 13 former colonies found expression in the first Congress. All laws passed by this Congress had to be approved by the individual states and to be carried out by the executive organs of the states, which could even reject demands for the money necessary for common projects. The Articles of Confederation and a Perpetual Union were the supreme law for the land 1781–89. But the first years of independence demonstrated in practice that these could provide a basis for only a loose confederation of neighbouring states and not a foundation effective enough for a strong and economically consolidated bourgeois republic. Very soon it became evident that the states had to give up a bigger share of their sovereignty not only in executive and judicial powers but also in legislative responsibility. So in spite of the reluctance of some politicians, who feared the United States might fall under a new form of tyranny if they introduced a powerful central government, and who especially feared the power of the working people, representatives of the individual states began to work out a constitution in Philadelphia in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. But the representatives of the progressive wing of the American revolutionaries were excluded from this work to a large extent. The Constitution was finally ratified in 1789. It was based on the ideas of the bourgeois revolution, on the bourgeois conception of freedom and equality of man:

“... so verstand es sich von selbst, daß die Forderung einen allgemeinen, über den einzelnen Staat hinausgreifenden Charakter annahm, daß Freiheit und Gleichheit proklamiert wurden als Menschenrechte. Wobei es für den spezifisch bürgerlichen Charakter dieser Menschenrechte bezeichnend ist, daß die amerikanische Verfassung, die erste, welche die Menschenrechte anerkennt, in demselben Atem die in Amerika bestehende Sklaverei der Farbigen bestätigt, die Klassenvorrechte wurden geächtet, die Rassenvorrechte geheiligt.”¹

In accordance with the ideas of the enlightenment (e. g. Montesquieu's “*L'esprit des lois*”, 1748) this new Constitution provided a federal government based on the principle of the division of powers into three branches of government: a

legislature, an executive and a judiciary. This organisation of government was to guarantee the future growth and prosperity of the bourgeois class and its state by introducing a subtle system of mutual controls and interdependencies, the so-called "system of checks and balances". This system of checks and balances is a sophisticated series of interlinked responsibilities and control mechanisms by which each of the three branches of the US government can exercise influence on the two others. The experience of Shays's Rebellion² provided an additional reason for establishing the federal Constitution, because the American bourgeoisie was determined to hold back the democratic masses, who demanded a more consistent realization of the progressive ideals and promises of the American Revolution:

"... Von dem Augenblick an, wo die bürgerliche Forderung der Abschaffung der Klassenvorrechte gestellt wird, tritt neben sie die proletarische Forderung der Abschaffung der Klassen selbst ... erst in religiöser Form, später gestützt auf die bürgerlichen Gleichheitstheorien selbst. Die Proletarier nehmen die Bourgeoisie beim Wort ... die Gleichheit soll nicht nur scheinbar, nicht bloß auf dem Gebiet des Staates, sie soll auch wirklich auf dem gesellschaftlichen und ökonomischen Gebiet durchgeführt werden".³

So the capitalists and slave holders finally came to regard a stronger central power as necessary for political and economic reasons and secured this.

Concerning the legislative branch of government, Article I, Section 1, of the Constitution states:

"All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives."⁴

This introduction of a bicameral Congress was the result of a highly controversial debate among the authors of the document, who were arguing for either a parliament elected on a democratic majority principle (the Virginia Plan of the representatives of the bigger, more powerful and populous states) or were pleading for a Congress on the basis of the equality of all the united states regardless of size and population (the New Jersey Plan of the representatives of the smaller and less powerful, less populous states). The final result was the so-called Connecticut Compromise consisting of the combination of both conceptions in the form of the House of Representatives (with, originally, 65 members assigned according to the population figures of 1790, i.e. 1 Representative per 30 000 inhabitants) and the Senate (two Senators per state). This solution was an important step forward in the development of bourgeois parliamentarism.

According to Article I, Section 2, the members of the House of Representatives are to be elected in a general, direct, secret, and equal election. Since 1913 this has also been true for the Senate (the 17th Amendment of the Constitution abolished the right of the state legislatures to nominate the Senators).

Congressional elections take place on the Tuesday following the first Monday in the November of even years. The term for Representatives (Congressmen) is two years. Senators sit for 6 years, and 1/3 of the seats in the Senate come up for election every two years.

The US Constitution left it to the individual states, which with the exception of Nebraska (unicameral Congress) all have a legislature similar to the Union (a bicameral system), to lay down the requirements for active participation in Congressional elections. So besides the general stipulation, valid for people all over the USA, that one has to be citizen of the USA and over 18 years old (21 until 1971—26th Amendment) over 60 criteria have been laid down which have turned out to be very effective restrictions preventing a considerable number of potential voters from taking part in the elections. So it is hardly possible to speak of real general and equal elections in the US. One of the most important restrictions is the residential requirement stating that you also have to be a citizen of the state where you intend to vote. To obtain this status takes between a few weeks and two years. This regulation is especially directed against migrant workers who move from state to state looking for work. Until 1965 several states imposed poll taxes directed mainly against Black people, workers and the poor population in the countryside. Up to the sixties literacy tests excluded those who had only received an insufficient education—now a minimal education of 6 years elementary school is regarded as an adequate qualification. Even nowadays unemployed workers, people living on welfare money and soldiers on overseas duty in several states are not allowed to cast a vote. Such restrictions are a suitable means for hindering those parts of the population from participating in elections who are objectively most interested in social changes. So the democratic rights of a large part of the working class and especially of the racial minorities are seriously curtailed.⁵

The Functioning of the US Congress

In the *House of Representatives* 435 Congressmen plus 3 nonvoting members representing the District of Columbia—almost exclusively members of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party—represent the interests of the capitalist class. The figure of 435 Representatives has been constant since 1910 and is based on a census taken every 10 years according to the Constitution (the first one was taken in 1790). By this means the relation of the numbers of citizens per Representative is reapportioned (now it is 1 for every 470 000). But each state—including those with very low population figures—is guaranteed at least one seat (states like Rhode Island, Alaska, Vermont or North Dakota). On the other hand California elected 43 and New York 39 Representatives to the 95th Congress in 1976.

For the 95th Congress the Democratic Party again won a majority in both houses (House of Representatives: 293 D—142 R; Senate: 61 D—38 R—1 Indepen-

dent). So President James Earl Carter (D) can lean on a majority of his party members in both houses though this does not automatically guarantee support of his legislative and other political initiatives as several reactions of the Congress have proved in 1977 and 1978. But as the President cannot constitutionally be a member of Congress, his policy does not in all details depend on the full support of Congress, though it is of course in the long run very difficult for a President to neglect the intentions and policies of Congress.

Unlike Britain, the United States maintains a firm and constitutionally founded division of labour between the two houses, thus making both necessary parts of the lawmaking machinery of the country. But of course any bills may be introduced in either house (except money bills which may only be initiated in the House of Representatives). All bills have to pass both houses before they come to the President's table for his signature or veto.

Important fields of legislative work and the special responsibilities of the House of Representatives include laws concerning financial matters. These are:

- to levy taxes and to borrow and spend money;
- to regulate interstate and foreign commerce;
- to mint money;
- to establish postal services;
- to support armed forces;
- to regulate the naturalization of foreigners;
- to create courts below the Supreme Court.

The House of Representatives has administrative tasks concerned with the Federal District of Columbia and the Territories of the USA.

In addition the House has a very important constitutional function: it is the organ of government which is entitled to initiate alterations in the Constitution. But for good reasons changes in the Constitution demand a very broad mandate for alterations—2/3 of the votes of both houses plus the consent of 3/4 of all states by vote of their legislators and a popular referendum.

The House of Representatives also carries out a judicial function in so far as it initiates impeachments, i. e. it has the right to make a formal charge against an executive or judicial officer accused of constitutionally-defined wrongdoing. If such a situation occurs (as e. g. in the Watergate affair) the House starts an investigation and its Committee on the Judiciary prepares the case. After a vote of this Committee and a positive resolution of the House the case is handed over to a special committee of the Senate. This committee investigates the case and then consults further with the House of Representatives. After that in a floor-meeting sitting as a court the Senate decides whether the defendant is guilty or not. For a conviction a majority of 2/3 of the votes is necessary. The consequence of this decision would be that the impeached person would have to resign. But the process of impeachment is highly complicated and can be delayed and blocked. Up to the present time in only 4 cases have impeached persons been sentenced and never has a US President been convicted (President

Andrew Johnson was finally acquitted by one vote in 1868; Richard Nixon resigned under the pressure of his party before the Senate started the actual impeachment trial).

All these facts demonstrate the far-reaching functions and powers the Constitution grants the House of Representatives and in the past people in the USA have frequently spoken of "Congressional government". But an analysis of recent US history, especially after World War II, reveals a considerable expansion of the presidential powers and a tendency towards a presidential dictatorship.

This development is expressed in the trend of the executive to usurp rights and privileges of the legislature—thus Presidents Truman, Johnson and Nixon acted not only against the sovereignty of other nations and the human rights laid down in the Declaration of Independence but also against the US Constitution when they began their de facto military aggression against the Korean People's Democratic Republic (1950), against the DRV (1965), and Cambodia (1970). And even if we have no illusions about the character and political inclinations of the US Congress it is far more than a formality when the House of Representatives' right to decide whether or not there should be a war is waived. In the preparation of the impeachment against Richard Nixon, however, and especially since his resignation, there has been a strong tendency towards restoring at least part of these former powers to Congress as a broader power and control organ of the ruling class in this state monopolist country.

The presiding officer of the House is the Speaker who is elected by the members of the majority party at the beginning of each first Congressional term. He holds a very influential position because, together with the Rules Committee, he can decide the succession of the bills to be debated and which of the Representatives should speak at which time. He also appoints the members and chairmen of the committees and has to sign the bills before they pass on to the Senate.

In both houses the two big bourgeois parties have organized their members into party organizations (caucuses), led respectively by the majority leader or the minority leader. These are supported by a floor leader and an assistant floor leader (called "whips"), who try to convince their members to stick to party decisions in their work. But in practical Congressional life one can observe that within the framework of the two-party-system in many cases the wings of the two parties vote together—that is especially true for the reactionary right extremists, not to speak of the influence lobbyism has on the results.

In the *Senate*, the upper house of the Congress, 100 Senators (two from each state) represent the interests of the bourgeoisie of their home-states and those of the ruling class of the USA as a whole. They are usually even more experienced politicians than the Representatives. They may serve for a much longer term and as there is at no time anything like a completely new Senate (there could be at most only 1/3 newcomers every two years and many Senators are re-elected for two and more terms) this insures a more stable continuity in the Senate legislative and practical political work, and in many cases an even more conservative and

reactionary course than in the House of Representatives. More sober attitudes concerning international détente and peaceful co-existence expressed by a considerable number of Senators especially from the Committee on Foreign Relations in the 92nd, 93rd and 94th Congress nevertheless show that there exist quite contradictory political currents in this house as well. Candidates for the Senate must be at least 30 years old and must have been citizens of the USA for 9 years. They must, of course, be residents of the states they want to represent.

• The two most important fields of work of the Senate are:

- The ratification of international treaties, which means that the Senate has a great influence on the foreign policy of the executive (especially via the above mentioned Committee on Foreign Affairs);
- The Senate approves or rejects the top civil and military officers appointed by the President and can by this means control the composition of the personnel of the executive and judiciary.

The presiding officer of the Senate is the Vice President who is, however, not entitled to take part in the decisions of the Senate unless there is a tie (50:50 vote). In the Presidential elections of 1976 Walter Frederick Mondale, former Democratic Senator of Minnesota, was elected Vice President.

The legislative work of the two houses is carried out more or less in the same way:

When a Senator or a Representative introduces a bill, he sends it to the clerk of his house, who gives it a number and title. This is called the first reading, and the bill is then referred to the proper committee.

The committee may decide the bill is unwise or unnecessary and "table" it, thus killing it at once. Or it may decide the bill is worthwhile and hold hearings to listen to facts and opinions presented by experts and other interested persons. After members of the committee have debated the bill and perhaps offered amendments, a vote of the committee is taken. If the vote is favourable the bill is sent back to the floor of the House. The clerk reads the bill sentence by sentence to the house: this is known as the second reading. Members may then debate the bill and offer amendments. In the House of Representatives, the time for debate is limited by a closure rule, but there is no such restriction in the Senate unless there is a two-thirds vote for closure. This makes a filibuster⁶ possible, in which one or more opponents hold the floor to delay and finally to table the bill. The third reading is by title only, and the bill is put to a vote. The bill then goes to the other house, and, if it has passed it, is sent to the President. If he approves, he signs it, and the bill becomes a law. However, if he vetoes the bill by refusing to sign it and sends it back to the house of origin with his reasons for the veto, the objections are read and debated, and a roll-call vote is taken. If the bill receives two thirds of the votes (or more), it is sent to the other

house for a vote. If that house also passes it by a two-thirds vote, the President's veto is overridden and the bill becomes a law. Should the President desire neither to sign nor to veto the bill, he may retain it for ten days, Sunday excepted, after which time it automatically becomes a law without his signature. However, if Congress has adjourned within those ten days, the bill is automatically killed, this process of indirect rejection being known as a pocket veto.⁷

A symptom of the decline of the legislative initiative of the Congress is the fact that only a few of the important bills actually originate in the House of Representatives. Roughly 80% of the bills enacted in the mid seventies originated in the executive branch.

As there are several thousand bills introduced every term, of which only a few (usually less than 10%) are passed, it goes without saying that the biggest and most decisive part of the legislative work has to be done in the committees. These are composed of groups of Congressmen or Senators (up to 30 members in the House of Representatives), who become experts in special fields of legislation. They are headed by a chairman who has won his post by seniority, which means by many years in the respective house plus loyalty and efficiency in work for his party and the ruling class. In 1946 the number of committees was drastically curtailed. In the 94th Congress there have been 22 standing committees in the House and 19 in the Senate with 268 subcommittees and members elected from both parties. There are several kinds of committees: permanent or standing committees dealing with long term major legislative problems such as e.g. the Committee on Appropriations, or the Committee on Banking and Currency, the Committee on Government Operations, the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, and the Committee on Ways and Means in the House or the above-mentioned Committee on Foreign Relations in the Senate. On the other hand, there are committees necessary for the formulating and passing of just one law, or for carrying out just one limited investigation. These are temporary, special or investigating committees. For most legislative fields there are parallel committees in both houses but there also exist joint committees in both houses consisting of members of both houses for especially important and complex fields of longterm work (e.g. the Committee on Atomic Energy and the Committee on Taxation). If the legislators in the two houses have different opinions on one bill a temporary reference or conference committee resolves the difficulties.

The Rules Committees have strategic positions in both houses because they, together with their presiding officers, lay down the rules and procedure of work, the succession of bills and the course of debates. They may delay or push through the passing of a certain bill. A typical example of the power of congressional committees is provided by the House Committee on un-American Activities (HUAC, in 1970 renamed HISC—House Interior Security Committee).⁸ This committee, which was founded in 1938, after 1945/46 rabidly persecuted progressive organizations and individuals criticising the aggressive anti-communist

courts of the Truman Administration. The first aim of HUAC was the persecution of the CPUSA and of democratic minded intellectuals (such as e. g. the Hollywood Ten in 1947).⁹ HUAC was the fountainhead of the anti-communist hysteria in the era of McCarthyism. HUAC summoned hundreds of progressives and liberals, and blackmailed the people who did not "co-operate", i. e. give information about their own and their friends' political ideas in such a way that many of them (teachers, journalists, artists and scientists) lost their jobs and could not get proper work for a long time. The Committee punished them with the assistance of courts, on the basis of so-called "contempt of Congress" or "perjury", if the summoned witnesses refused to answer or did not betray their political convictions and those of their friends and comrades.

The Congressmen and Senators are almost exclusively members of the two big bourgeois parties. The two-party system takes care that very few or no outsiders are elected. Only a very few independents (at no time after 1945 more than 2 people who were not members of the two big parties) entered Congress. Among the elected Representatives more than 50% are lawyers (Senators over 67%)¹⁰. They are legal experts who not only know how to make laws in the interests of their class but who know all the parliamentary tricks and are very capable of delaying and obstructing the making of laws which go against their plans. In addition to this group of lawyers more than 30% are executives of banks and of big business, with a smaller number of journalists, scientists, estate owners, and a few trade union representatives, but no workers. At least 20% of the Senators were millionaires in the seventies.¹¹ Only in recent years have the numbers of representatives of racial minorities been rising because of the pressures within the country which reflect the changing world situation. But even if there were 15 Black and 3 other minority Representatives in 1977 and, altogether, 19 women in the House, in the Senate there was in 1977 not a single woman and there were only one Black Senator and two other Senators from national minorities in 1977. In neither house is there a representative of American youth. This is excluded by the Constitution: Representatives have to be at least 25 years of age and Senators 30.

The Representatives and Senators enjoy a wide range of privileges: they received a compensation of \$57,500 in 1977, plus travelling and office expenses. They cannot be prosecuted in connection with statements made in the Congress and they cannot be arrested except for treason, felony or a breach of the peace. But as the Ralph Nader report "Who Runs Congress?" shows, a number of legislators have been trying to abuse their immunity to cover financial and other crimes.¹²

The Constitution strictly prohibits legislators from holding office in the executive branch—so any member of the Congress who intends to accept an executive job has to give up his seat. Congressmen and Senators are also forbidden to do business or to continue their work as lawyers and so use their government contacts and influence for immediate personal enrichment. But it is common

knowledge in the USA that a great number of the members of both houses keep their business contacts. When, in 1969, Congress demanded information about the financial sources of the income of its members, the "Washington Post" published facts and figures demonstrating very clearly that US legislators voted for their own private financial interests. For instance, 2/3 of the legislators admitted to having close connections with big business, to owning shares in monopoly firms and to working as legal advisers for them during Congressional terms (275 admitted having substantial capital investments, 90 owned bankshares, 37 said that they still sat on the Boards of Directors of monopoly firms). According to the "Congressional Record" of 1969, 183 legislators admitted to owning shares in firms doing business with the government (especially in the armament, aircraft, oil, and energy industries). Nobody need wonder in whose interests the legislative work is carried out, for instance, in the Committee on Banking and Currency where more than a third of its members are big bank investors, or in the House Armed Services Committee where four members own stock in companies that are leading defense contractors. In the Budget Committee more than 1/4 of the members had close ties with banks in 1968.¹³

It is quite obvious that one of the most powerful lobbies, the bank lobby, finds its most active supporters and propagandists among just these legislators.

Lobbyism in the USA is a specific capitalist institution for pushing through or obstructing bills according to the wishes of a special section of the bourgeoisie. In many cases lobbies are economic or political "interest-groups". Lobbyism goes back to the tradition of buttonholding legislators in the ante-rooms of the Capitol by people and groups who wanted to hand in petitions and discuss legislative projects with the men for whom they had voted. Now it is an important means by which the capitalist class extends its influence on the legislative process beyond the elections and over the whole Congressional term. The means they use are corruption and pressure. In Washington there now exist over 200 lobbies employing more than 15,000 people in full-time jobs (that means 30 times as many lobbyists as legislators), and the number of lobbies is constantly rising. The lobbies work under the Regulation of the Lobbying Act of 1946 which demands that they register in Washington, and which also lays down some vague rules for their activities. But in reality the lobbies exercise an illegal influence on legislation by sponsoring bills which are then introduced in their interests, by working out draft bills which are then introduced by legislators, and by winning sufficient numbers of Representatives and Senators to favour their projects by means of indirect or hidden corruption and pressure. In return for their assistance the lobbies offer the legislators legal information, research results, press support and also money, which officially can be accepted only for political (e.g. election) purposes but actually is frequently used for private or semi-private purposes as in the case of Senator Dodd, who was convicted of embezzling over \$160,000 election money. Lobbyism has a very important effect in Congress, and the lobbies are sometimes called the "third house". Very important laws have been initiated by lobbies. The Prohibition of 1920/33 was mainly a product of lobby activities. The reactio-

nary anti-working class and anti-trade union Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 was the result of combined efforts of industrial lobbies and the National Association of Manufacturers. In recent years the lobby of the car industry has been trying to stop or at least delay stricter legislation concerning safety and pollution regulations for car construction in order to avoid costly investments which might reduce their profits. The tobacco lobby has been very active to prevent the passing of more consistent health regulations limiting their prospects of profit. There exists a very powerful oil lobby in Washington with a far-reaching influence on the economic and foreign policy of the United States. Even the big trade unions and professional interest groups like the Medical Association have lobbies in the US capital looking after their special interests, which, in the case of the Union lobby, means the interests of the corrupt leadership. Besides, there exist quite influential lobbies propagating the support of e. g. the aggressive policy of Israel and other allied countries (Germany lobby). Among the hundreds of laws passed in the period after World War II there are some characteristic ones which have effectively helped to provide the legal basis for the post-war political climate. So in 1947 the Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act (official title: Labor Management Relations Act) which reduced the right to strike very drastically for the American workers. According to the Taft-Hartley Act strikes have to be announced by the trade unions 60 days before they can actually be started. This demagogically so-called "cooling-off period" can be extended in cases of "national emergency" for another 80 days by the President. By such measures strikes were to lose their impact as weapons of the working class. The trade unions were also not allowed to have political programmes and to have Communists as organizers. The unions' funds were also put under the supervision of a federal National Committee of Labor Relations.

This law was then supplemented in the middle of the cold war (1950) by the anti-democratic McCarran Act (Internal Security Act) aiming at the elimination of the democratic rights of Communists in the USA and of the members of 275 other democratic organizations which were regarded as subversive. The McCarran Act demanded the registration of the CP and its members with the Department of Justice as "agents of a foreign power" and inflicted heavy sentences for disobedience. It refused members of the CP and other progressive organisations the right to be members of trade unions, limited their chances to find work, refused them passports for travelling abroad, and cancelled even their rights to vote. The American Communists and many other progressive people fought a hard struggle against this undemocratic law and in 1966 even the Supreme Court of the USA had to admit that the McCarran Act violated the American Constitution. In 1974 a victory was again won over some of the remnants of this law. But still the Taft-Hartley Act and other anti-democratic laws seriously limit the rights of American citizens.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Engels, F., "Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft" in: MEW, Band 20, Berlin 1973, p. 98.
- 2) Shays's Rebellion (1786–87) was the first of a series of militant popular protest actions against bourgeois rule and the financial pressures on those who had given their blood for the American Revolution. At its climax the farmer and army captain, Daniel Shays, led a contingent of 1,200 men toward the Springfield arsenal. The Rebellion was defeated but the American bourgeoisie had to improve the economic lot of the indebted farmers and of the workmen in certain respects.
- 3) Engels, F., op. cit., pp. 98.
- 4) Constitution of the United States of America, Article I, Section 1.
- 5) Besides, there is a great influence on the election results by party propaganda via the mass media and the manipulation of the composition of election districts that contribute to the maintenance of power of the two big bourgeois parties. In this latter respect the system of gerrymandering (introduced in 1812 by the then governor of Massachusetts Elbridge Gerry) is one of the most sophisticated means. It involves a division of communities and states into constituencies in such a way that a maximum of the voting power of the opposing party is negated, that means wasted, by concentrating big opposing majorities in a few regions and on the other hand organizing constituencies with relatively small but stable majorities for the party of the "gerrymanderers".
- 6) Filibuster (freibeuten) means the excessive use of the right to speak on a certain problem as long as necessary so as to obstruct or at least delay a "too liberal" bill by an organized, frequently very reactionary, minority in the Senate. Members make marathon speeches in order to delay a debated bill until the end of a term and thus kill it. There have been speeches of over twenty hours recorded. A frequent effect is that a bill is dropped when the business of the Senate is held up for a long period.
- 7) Cf. Labor Fact Book 16, New York 1963.
- 8) In 1974 the House Interior Security Committee was dissolved and its functions were taken over by the Judiciary Committee.
- 9) In 1947 ten outstanding American screenwriters and directors (among them Alvah Bessie, Albert Maltz, John Howard Lawson, and Ring Lardner jr.) were investigated by the HUAC because of "Communist infiltration of the American film industry". In 1950 they were sentenced to prison and also fined and blacklisted when they attacked the fascist trends of these investigations.
- 10) Katznelson, I./M. Kesselmann, *The Politics of Power*, New York 1975, p. 295
- 11) Ibid., p. 296.
- 12) Green, M., *Who Runs Congress?*—Ralph Nader Congress Project, New York 1975; the journalist Ralph Nader is a spokesman of American consumer organisations.
- 13) Katznelson, I./M. Kesselmann, op. cit., p. 301.

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The Executive of the USA

The Powers and Duties of the President

According to the American Constitution (Article II, 1) "the executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America". As the head of the executive branch of the government he is the Chief Executive. Only a native born citizen who is 35 years of age and has been a resident of the USA for 14 years may become President. In case of his removal from office, death, resignation or inability to carry out his duties, the Vice President shall follow him in office, and, if the same happens to the latter, the Speaker of the House is next in line.¹ Presidential power is not only granted by the Constitution but also by Acts of Congress or Executive Orders and sometimes by precedents set by former presidents. A good deal of informal authority is sometimes a powerful weapon in the hands of the President, e. g., the right to speak on behalf of the American people and the appeal to patriotism and other basic values of the Nation in order to secure his programme in the interests of the ruling class, to discredit critics of the system or to guarantee his reelection, etc.

The President is elected for a term of four years and can be reelected once, but "if he has held the office of President or acted as President for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President" he shall not be elected to this office more often than once.

In detail, the powers granted to him are:

1. He is the *Head of State* and responsible for the conduct of foreign relations. He receives all representatives of other states, and concludes treaties with the consent of a two-thirds majority of the Senate. He can avoid this constitutional requirement by negotiating executive agreements that do not need senatorial approval.
2. As the *Head of the Federal Government* he is responsible for the execution and enforcement of law. Though the President's involvement in legislative affairs is limited to vetoing legislation, determining the time of adjournment when the two Houses of Congress cannot agree and calling special sessions of the legislature, it has become customary for the President to set the agenda and first alternative for debate in Congress by submitting specific proposals and priorities for major legislation, e. g., in the State of the Union Message now broadcast over nationwide TV, and only seldom does Congress not respond to presidential initiative. Moreover, the President appoints judges, ambassadors, all secretaries of his Cabinet and other officers of the Federal Government with the

consent of the Senate. He also can remove them, with the exception of the justices of the Supreme Court, who are appointed for life. He has the power to grant reprieves and to pardon offenders against federal law.

3. As the *Commander in Chief* the President controls all armed forces, Army, Navy, Air Force, including all Secret Services. He has important authority in using US troops, and in times of crises and war his power is nearly absolute.

He receives for his services a compensation, not to be increased or diminished during the time he is in office.² The President has to take an oath to support the Constitution and he can be removed from office on impeachment for and conviction of treason, bribery or other crimes and misdemeanours.

The *Vice President's* official duty is to preside over the Senate. There he has the right to cast his vote in case of a tie. He has the possibility of becoming President when the Chief Executive dies or is replaced. Though the political influence of Vice Presidents is not significant, recent Presidents have used them to chair policy-making bodies (e. g. the National Aeronautics and Space Council) and to serve as members on other councils (e. g., the National Security Council).

The executive branch employs almost 3 million people.³ All of them are responsible to the President. This ever increasing bulk of administration, due to the advanced stage of state monopoly capitalism, is usually divided into three different groups:

1. the Executive Office of the President,
2. the Executive Departments, whose Heads form the Cabinet, and
3. the Independent Offices and Establishments (see Table, p. 40).

The Cabinet

The secretaries of the 13 departments and, according to the problems to be solved, the heads of some other executive offices form the Cabinet⁴ whose sessions are held in secrecy. The secretaries are all appointed by the President with the approval of the Senate. They generally but not necessarily belong to his party. The agreement of the major monopoly groupings is the primary consideration and their party affiliation only the secondary consideration in choosing them. The Cabinet members may be asked for advice by the President but he is not bound to consult them when making his policy. They are in office as long as they agree with the policy of their Presidents, i. e., newly elected Presidents bring about a change of cabinet members.

The Departments

The present form of the US Executive, not prescribed in the Constitution, is the result of a long development. Up to the time of President Andrew Jackson (1829–37) all federal government officials had permanent jobs while the positions in the state administrations were given to supporters of the political party in office after the elections (spoils system). President Jackson extended this system to the federal administrations. This regular change of civil servants was called "rotation in office". All departments resemble each other in their structures: the secretaries and their deputy secretaries or undersecretaries have a staff of assistant secretaries, assistants, directors, inspectors, advisers, administrators, and other civil servants.

The *Department of State* (1789) ranks first among the departments. It deals with foreign policy and all other foreign affairs. There are subdivisions for continents and regions, e.g., for Africa, Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, the Near East and South Asia, all Oceans, etc.; for the United Nations and other international organizations, etc. This department is also in charge of the neo-colonialist Peace Corps and, like some other departments, of questions of intelligence. The Secretary of State keeps the seal of the USA and countersigns the proclamations of the President. He maintains the connections between the Federal Government and the respective authorities of the States of the Union. In the State Department, the authentic texts of all federal laws in force are kept. The interest of the big monopolies in foreign policy can be seen in the links between the corporations and their men in the State Department as for instance John Foster Dulles (1953–59) or Henry A. Kissinger (1973–77) belonging to the Rockefeller group.

The *Department of Defense* (1947) was reorganized out of the Department of War (1789) by the National Security Act (1947). Its other name, the Pentagon, comes from its building's shape. The Secretary of Defense commands the three service branches, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, which in turn are directly administered by their own secretaries. At his disposal are also the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), a platform organization for all military secret services and the National Security Agency (NSA), the world's largest electronic spying centre. Of all departments, the Defense Department has the highest budget, rising from year to year as demanded by the Secretary of Defense, and staff officers of the Pentagon. Thus they help the big corporations of the military-industrial complex to speed up the armaments race and get maximum profits. The Pentagon is the supervising authority for about 500 larger and several thousand smaller US military bases in more than 30 foreign countries. These bases are an important element of the policy of imperialist aggression. This is obvious from the number of military actions in which the USA has been involved after 1945.⁵ These military bases function within a system of aggressive pacts like NATO. Moreover, a large amount of modern strategic arms and of military personnel are concentrated in the US bases in Western Europe. They are directed

first and foremost against the Soviet Union and the other socialist states but they can also be used against democratic forces in the countries where the bases are located. In former colonies, these bases are strongholds against the socialist path of development. The American Forces Network (AFN) comprising numerous radio stations throughout the world spreads news not only for American soldiers but also selected programmes for propaganda and manipulation purposes.

The *Department of Justice* (1870) houses a wide range of different offices. These subdivisions deal with antitrust affairs, civil rights, crimes, drug law enforcement, land and natural resources, legislative affairs, management and finance, public information, taxes, immigration appeals, immigration and naturalization, parole, prisons, community relations, law enforcement, etc.

The *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)* is part of this department. It was founded in 1908 and organized in its present form in the early twenties during the infamous Palmer Raids in which scores of Communists, Socialists and members of the IWW were arrested, deported or killed. Subsequently, it became a secret political police agency existing in addition to the police of the single states in some fifty field divisions in the principal cities of the USA, directing its efforts against the Left while posing simply as an agency for the investigation of crime and enforcement of federal law in matters like counterfeiting, internal revenue, postal and customs violations, espionage, sabotage, treason and other matters of internal security, as well as kidnapping, transportation of stolen goods across state lines, interstate traffic in prostitution, etc. John Edgar Hoover, the head of the FBI virtually from 1924 until his death in 1972, acquired and wielded a power which nobody, not even presidents, dared to challenge. Thanks in part to the impact of Watergate, a small corner of the curtain of secrecy was lifted which had successfully concealed some of the FBI's activities, e.g., a statement was made concerning some counterintelligence programmes (COINTELPRO) directed against the CPUSA and other progressive organizations, especially the Black liberation movement. The FBI has also admitted to keeping dossiers on high officials, containing material on Presidents, members of Congress, federal officials and personal opponents of Hoover. There is also close cooperation between the FBI and the CIA in all fields.

The *Department of the Treasury* (1789) deals with all monetary affairs. Further departments are: the *Department of the Interior* (1849), the *Department of Agriculture* (1862), the *Department of Commerce* (1903), the *Department of Labor* (1913), the *Department of Health, Education and Welfare* (1953) founded rather late for a country with a high level of scientific and technological development and thus demonstrating the lack of interest of the ruling class in questions of social concern; the *Department of Housing and Urban Development* (1965), the *Department of Transportation* (1966) and the *Department of Energy* (1977). There is no department for questions of culture. In late 1979, a separate Cabinet-level *Department of Education* has been created and the remaining parts of the former *Department of HEW* have been renamed the *Department of Health and Human Services*.

The Executive Office of the President

The major staff agencies in the executive branch belong to the Executive Office of the President (EOP). Their basic function is to formulate and coordinate policies and programmes and to advise the President. These agencies show the expansion of power and jurisdiction of the President which have brought about such an immense apparatus, which is still growing today. The EOP is more significant than the committees of Congress or the Cabinet.

The *National Security Council (NSC)* is one of the most important agencies within the EOP, whose chairman is the President himself, with the Chief Adviser for National Security as Secretary. Other members are the Secretaries of State, of Defense and of the Treasury and the Attorney General next to some military and civil officers, among them the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Strategic issues of military, political and economic importance are discussed and planned there. This is where the aggression against the peoples of Indo-China was initiated without the constitutionally stipulated approval of Congress. By the Act of National Security (1947) the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was reshaped as the *Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)*. The Director of the CIA is appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate. Originally, it was created as an agency of counter-intelligence for gathering military information but it functions chiefly as an instrument for fostering subversion, sabotage, political assassination and armed intervention in other countries. The CIA coordinates the intelligence activities of all other US spy-organizations and analyses the information of all government offices. The headquarters of the CIA is in Langley, Virginia, near Washington, D. C. Its officially stated budget amounts only to \$750 million a year.⁶ But if indirect financing hidden in the budget of other offices is added, the CIA is clearly an organization with thousands of millions at its disposal. For its open or covert operations and vast expenditure it is accountable to no one except the President. The so-called watch-dog committees of Congress controlling its activities are virtually of no importance. The CIA has even been called the invisible government.⁷ "Radio Liberty" and "Radio Free Europe" are financed and supported by the CIA. The same applies to different news agencies and papers. The CIA owns several air lines, e. g., Air America, Air Asia and Southern Air Transport. Though it is expressly forbidden, the CIA carries on intelligence and police activities within the USA. It has become evident that the Agency keeps files on about 10,000 individuals, among them senators and representatives, not to speak of the compilation of other special dossiers on "suspicious persons" at various times. The use of telephone taps, break-ins and other unlawful measures helps to compile this material.

The *White House Office* is another institution of the EOP. It is loosely organized and comprises about 50 personal advisers, assistants, special assistants, etc. and their staffs. Its size and functions may vary from one President to another.

The *Office of Management and Budget* assists the President in preparing the

Budget and in formulating fiscal policy for the federal government. It is also charged with the supervision and control of the administration of the budget by coordinating departmental activities, improving efficiency in government and implementing the President's programme. The drafting of the budget is still the most important administrative process.

In addition to the agencies mentioned, there are: the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, the Council of Economic Advisers, the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Office of the Special Representative for Trade Negotiations, the Council of Environmental Quality, the Domestic Council, the Office of Telecommunications Policy, the Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention, the Federal Property Council, the Presidential Clemency Board, the Energy Resources Council, the Council on Wage and Price Stability.

The Independent Offices and Establishments

The Independent Agencies belong neither to the departments nor to the Executive Office of the President. Several have attained or even surpassed the size or importance of some departments but they do not have department rank. Nevertheless, some of their heads take part in the sessions of the Cabinet by invitation of the President; they are also appointed by him with the confirmation of the Senate. They undertake investigations and make reports at the request of the President or Congress. Their influence and authority is great. The Independent Offices and Establishments together with the other parts of the executive branch have become the nerve centre of corporate capitalism. Through law and custom it is widely accepted that the President will be in overall charge of planning, running and coordinating the corporate economy.

Presidential Elections

The President and Vice President of the United States are the only elective federal officials not elected by direct vote of the people. According to the Constitution (Article II; Amendments XII and XIV) they are elected by the members of the Electoral College.⁸ The Constitution, dealing only with the general aspects of the presidential elections, leaves important details of the voting procedure to the legislation of each state or federal laws. Thus state officials, such as the secretary of state or a bipartisan board appointed by the governor, generally supervise the county and municipal boards conducting the election. Only they decide who has the right to vote and what ballots are valid; they also determine whether the election is carried through with voting machines or printed ballots, etc. They are also able to control the election campaigns of minor parties by restrictive or bureaucratic measures, e.g., by requirements for signatures on

nominating petitions, etc.⁹ These conditions are described in the "New Program of the Communist Party USA.":

"In this struggle the people encounter not only the economic might of monopoly capital, but its political power which controls the machinery of government and the two-party electoral apparatus. Concentration of economic power breeds concentration of political power ... As monopoly capital has grown, its grip on the state machinery has tightened and extended. The government has virtually become the political instrument of the small group of monopolists to control the rest of the society".¹⁰

Because of the high degree of governmental power concentrated in the hands of the President, it is obvious that there is a competitive race for the White House. Since the access to these switchboards of state monopoly capitalism is very expensive, the presidential candidates "must be either independently wealthy or capable of securing financial backing.—Without adequate financing, a candidate's chances of success are nil".¹¹ Election costs have spiralled in the seventies, e.g., the 1972 elections represented a 300 per cent increase on the 1960 elections. The total amount in 1972 was more than \$400 million.¹² These sums come from the big corporations in the form of "fat-cat" contributions, because the ruling class ensures that the future president is a man of the big monopolies.¹³ Therefore the big corporations contribute to the election funds of both the Republican and the Democratic Party:

"Election has been viewed as one means of launching a political career, yet access is limited by legal and political restraints. Political parties, especially the Republicans and the Democrats, are deeply involved in both selection of candidates and in legal operation of our electoral machinery. Although in theory anyone can become president, in practice one has a much better chance if he is wealthy, upper class, marketable, white, male, and endorsed by the Republican or Democratic Party."¹⁴

It is important to mention that in a year of presidential elections (i.e., every four years, in a leap-year) every state also holds elections for the members of the House of Representatives; a third of the states have elections for US Senators; more than half of the states choose their governors; and most of them elect state legislatures and innumerable county and municipal officials.

In addition, a large number of states (1976: 30) conduct primary elections in which party members choose their leaders, i.e., one of the presidential candidates, delegates to the national conventions and candidates for public office. But all this is a "democratic" screen for state monopoly dictatorship.

The calendar of a presidential election starts, prior to all other activities, with the publication of the names of all those who are to run for the presidency on behalf of an interest group, no matter whether their petitions are turned in by themselves or by supporters. This is followed, early in the election year, by

the selection of delegates for the national party conventions. This is done either in primaries, or in state party conventions or simply by nomination through the party machinery. The national committees of both bourgeois parties fix the exact time and place of their national conventions and allot the number of delegates to each state in accordance with a complicated system of different kinds of delegates, e. g., delegates-at-large who represent their states, ordinary delegates who stand for their precinct and delegates with only fractional votes who are sent to the convention to allow the participation of a higher number of party members.

The *state presidential primaries* which are a kind of test or trial election had originally been introduced in order to allow the voter to select for himself the party candidates avoiding the decision of party bosses during the state party conventions. Sponsored by Governor La Follette, Wisconsin was the first state to introduce direct primaries in 1905 and many states followed. The number of primaries varied to a certain degree. The Primaries of the Democrats and of the Republicans take place on the same day in each state where they are held. The electorate can participate in the primaries provided that they have taken care to put their names in the rosters of the respective party. As already mentioned above, the purpose of the primaries is twofold:

- to nominate the delegates for the party conventions and
- to nominate officially the presidential candidates, to express preference for them, to test their popularity and give them a chance for personal propaganda.

The primaries differ from state to state and from party to party. In general there are four main variations:

1. The voters simply select delegates to the national convention usually listed on the ballot on different rosters with the presidential preferences of the delegate-candidates by choosing "en bloc";
2. advisory presidential-preference primaries, either uncommitted or preferring a certain presidential candidate;
3. binding winner-take-all preference primaries where convention delegates are required to vote for the presidential candidate who gets the most votes either in each precinct or statewide; the delegates themselves are elected either in the primary, or in later state conventions;
4. proportional-representation primaries where the voters cast ballots for presidential candidates, and the results are used to allocate convention delegates to the presidential candidates in proportion to the size of their vote—either by precincts or, in some cases, on a statewide basis.¹⁵

In most primaries it is not permitted to cast a vote for any party but the party registered, with the exception of Wisconsin, Michigan and Vermont. There is no party registration in Georgia and Indiana where the voters must swear to cast their votes for the party they voted for last time. The results for all primaries

clearly show which presidential candidates will be in the centre of interest of the national party conventions.

The delegates of the *Party National Conventions* representing upper-middle-class people rather than the American population as a whole vote for the presidential candidate of their respective party and later on for his *running mate* (Vice President). If a decision is not reached during the first ballot, the bargaining of the party bosses and all those having the economic and political power is intensified, the real men of power being the representatives of the big monopolies and of the military-industrial complex.

The election platforms approved at the national conventions are full of ambiguity and offer no clear-cut alternatives between the two big bourgeois parties. In them almost everything is promised to everybody. An examination of the election promises after one year or half the term of a president shows that he very seldom fulfils his election platform.¹⁶

Already during the primaries and especially after the national conventions, *election campaigns* are planned and paid for from the party election funds. Special appeals are made to attract the various segments of the electorate. Literature is distributed, radio transmissions organized, TV interviews or speeches staged and other mass media used. The nominees crisscross the country by airplane and address carefully staged meetings, hold press conferences, confer with local party representatives, shake hands with thousands of people, etc.

The two-step indirect method used to elect the President has been criticized from the early days of the Republic. When the voters go to the polls on *Presidential Election Day*, i. e., the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, they are nominally voting for the electors. The *Electoral College* of each state equals in number its congressional delegation (= 2 senators + the number of representatives). With 538 members of the Electoral College (= 100 senators + 435 representatives + 3 electors from the District of Columbia, as provided by the 23rd Amendment to the Constitution) a majority of 270 electoral votes is needed to elect the President and Vice President. As the candidate with the largest popular vote can fail to win a majority of the electoral votes, this voting system is undemocratic.

Political parties customarily nominate their electors at their respective state conventions. Electors cannot be members of Congress or persons holding federal office. Some states print the names of the candidates for president and vice president at the top of the November ballot while others list only the names of the electors. In either case, the electors (or the candidate) of the party receiving the highest vote (= a simple majority, be it only one single vote) are elected. The result of the election is known and acted on the very next day when the *popular votes* are counted.¹⁷

The second step of the presidential elections is as follows: The electors of the party which has won, meet on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December in their respective state capitals or in some other place prescribed by the state legislatures. By long-established custom they vote for their party

nominees, although the Constitution does not require them to do so. All of the states' electoral votes are then awarded to the winners (principle of "all or nothing"). After having named the President and Vice President, the lists are certified and sealed and sent by mail to the President of the Senate and opened by him on the 6th of January (or the following day if the 6th is a Sunday) at a joint session of Congress. Two Senators and two Representatives, a Democrat and a Republican in each case, count the votes. If no candidate has reached the absolute majority of 270 *electoral votes*, the President is elected by the House which selects one of three candidates having received most votes with all representatives from each state combining to cast one vote for that state; a quorum of two thirds has to be present. Then the Vice President is elected on the same principle, and, if no candidate has a majority, he is elected from the top two by the Senate, with the Senators voting as individuals. The term for the end and the start of Presidency is fixed at noon on the 20th of January.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) The Speaker of the House is followed by the President pro tem(pore) of the Senate and members of the Cabinet in order of rank: Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, etc.
- 2) The President gets a salary of \$200,000 and an expense allowance of \$50,000 a year. Further \$100,000 for travel expenses and official entertainment can be added. Cf. The World Almanac & Book of Facts 1978, New York, p. 246.
- 3) The exact figures are:

Executive branch	2,840,149
Legislative branch	40,715
Judicial branch	12,471

 Source: Workforce Analysis and Statistics Division, US Civil Service Commission; data of June 30, 1977, published in: The World Almanac 1978, p. 89.
- 4) The Cabinet is not mentioned in the Constitution in any form.
- 5) The World Almanac 1978 gives 14 military actions after 1945 in which the USA was involved; cf. p. 326-327.
- 6) Cf. US News & World Report, Jan. 12, 1976. This article gives a budget of \$750 million to 2 billion, but the same periodical of Aug. 8, 1975 gives a budget of 4 to 9 billion. The exact amount is kept secret.
- 7) Cf. Wise, D./T. B. Ross, The Invisible Government, New York 1964.
- 8) The presidential elections in the USA are two-step elections in which the President is elected by the Electoral College and not directly by the American people.
- 9) Especially the CPUSA was exposed to electoral restrictions, regarding the excessively high numbers of signatures on nominating petitions, to threats of violence, arrests and anticommunist invectives, etc.
- 10) Cf. New Program of the Communist Party USA, New York 1970, p. 18.
- 11) Cf. Ross, R. S., American Government, Chicago 1976, pp. 54, 55.
- 12) Cf. Katznelson, I./M. Kesselman, The Politics of Power, New York 1975, p. 259.
- 13) Ibid.; cf. also Fincher, E. B., The Government of the United States, New Jersey 1976, pp. 98, 99.
- 14) Katznelson, I./M. Kesselman, op., cit., p. 66.
- 15) Cf. Bone, H. A., American Politics and the Party System, New York 1965, p. 310ff.

- 16) The purpose of the election platform is neither to define nor to convince, but rather to attract and to confuse; it professes "the party's warm heart for veterans, labor, farmers, minorities, the American way, business (particularly small business), etc.; at best, they are seen as 'vote catchers' without binding the nominee chosen shortly after their adoption". Cf. *Bone, H.A.*, op. cit. p. 310ff.

17)

<i>Results of 1976:</i>	<i>Popular votes</i>	<i>Electoral votes</i>
James Earl (Jimmy) Carter (D)	40,825,839	297
Gerald R. Ford (R)	39,147,770	240

Ronald Reagan received one vote from an elector of Washington. Figures are from *The World Almanac 1978*.

With an average of about 55 per cent of the voting age population participation in the 1976 election, Jimmy Carter got a voter turnout of 51 per cent and Gerald Ford of 49 per cent of all votes. This is about 28 per cent of the electorate. Thus the election of Carter shows no essential shift in the political scenery of the USA. It shows the refusal of Ford's policy without real enthusiasm for Carter. He was taken as the minor evil.

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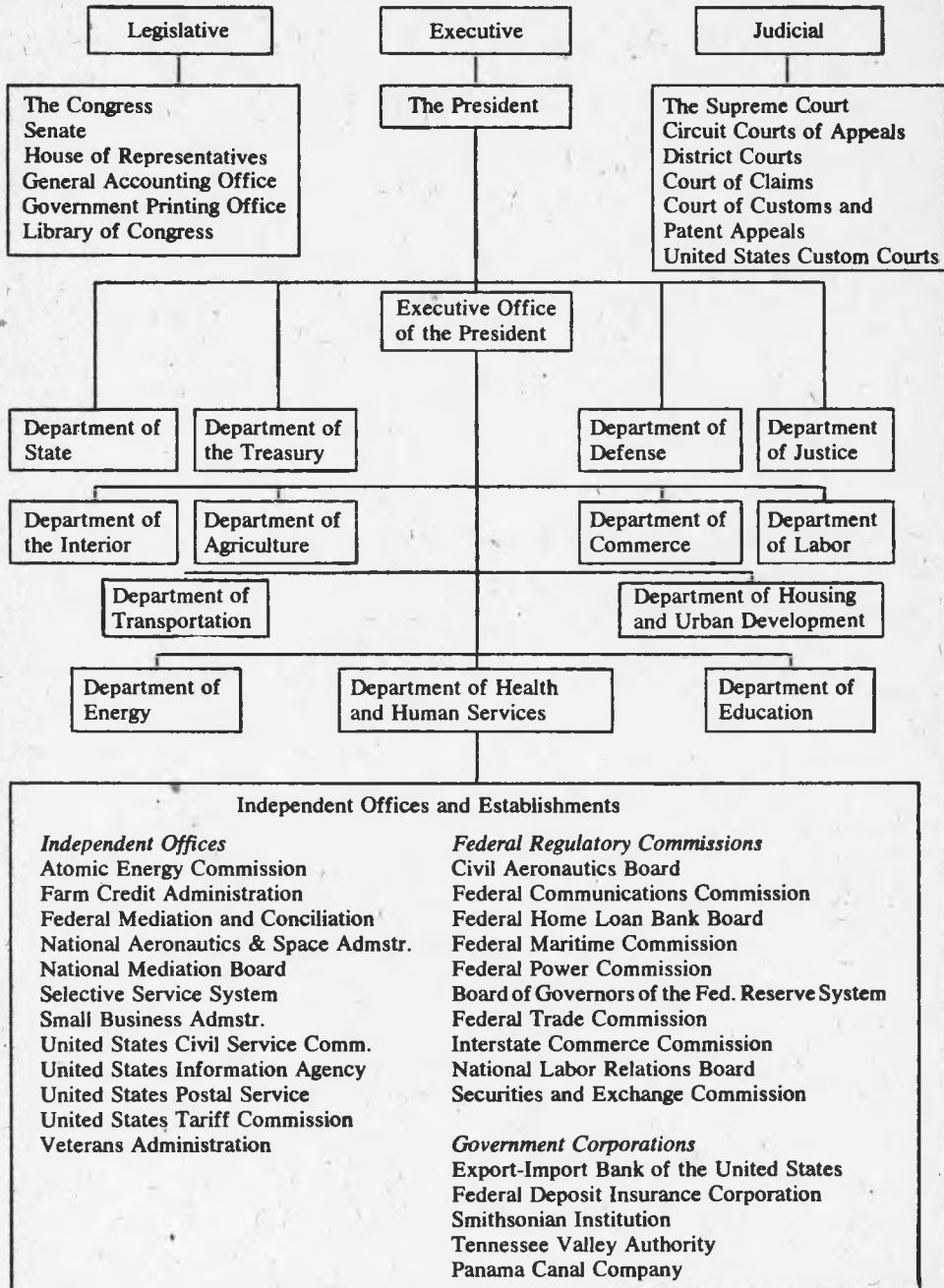
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Governmental Organization of the United States



The Judiciary of the USA

In the history of the American judiciary there have been many cases in which the names of the accused have become a symbol of the injustice, racial bias and prejudice of the courts against political dissenters, nonconformists or simply members of racial minorities.

At all times, right from the beginning of the existence of the USA, the legal system has been a class-oriented one intended to secure the position and property of the American bourgeoisie against the rest of society. The noble words of the Declaration of Independence,

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men ..."

have never in American history been true, and at no time in American legal history has equality of all citizens before the law existed.

The class character of the American judiciary is evident in the structure, function and practice of institutions at all levels of the extremely complex judicial system. An American peculiarity, which adds to the complexity inherent in the whole system, is the fact that the United States created a dual (parallel) judicial system—the federal judicial system and the states' judicial systems, each to a certain extent independent of the other and supreme in its own jurisdiction. This phenomenon has deep historical roots with farreaching influences on modern legal proceedings. The basic principle of the Constitution, which maintained the individual states as theoretically sovereign political entities within a union which was also sovereign in its own sphere of competence, led not only to conflicts between "states' rights" and "federal powers" but also to a highly diversified legal system. The common law of England was brought to the American continent by the first American settlers. It was applied there in so far as it could be in geographical and social conditions different from those of England. When the colonies declared their independence they drafted constitutions in which, in various terms, they acknowledged common law as the law of the states of the union; yet each of the states applied it according to its own view of common law. When new states joined the Union they again adopted common law as applied in the older states. The only exception was Louisiana, which had been French property before the USA purchased it and which favoured the "Code Napoléon". So today with the exception of Louisiana all states are governed by their systems of common law.

Common law as it is now known is, to a large extent, law made by judges and

based on decisions in earlier similar cases. Generally the decisions of the judges are regarded as precedents in subsequent cases. According to the Constitution, which leaves major areas of jurisdiction as prerogatives of the states, each state is sovereign in its power to explain the content of common law. The common law practices of the states, therefore, while being similar in some cases, may differ widely in others. In the USA state courts are bound only by their own decisions (precedents) and in some respect by the precedents of the federal courts. They are not obliged to pay attention to other state courts' precedents. A lower court is bound only by the decisions of the higher courts of its state. There is nothing, however, to prevent a court from following precedents of other state courts if the judges think this justified. All this leaves much space for arbitrariness, injustice, miscarriage of justice and legal trickery, common features of American legal practice. The cases of dozens of innocent victims of American injustice expose the whole system of class justice in the USA. The shocking court decisions against political dissenters framed like Joe Hill, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scottsboro Boys, Angelo Herndon, the Rosenbergs with their co-defendant Morton Sobell, Communists like Gus Hall or Henry Winston or Civil Rights fighters like the Wilmington 10, and many others, reveal a legal system which is governed by racial inequality and injustice, where trials are often used as a means of intimidation and political repression to check open or latent revolutionary currents in the country.¹

The Federal Judiciary

Article III of the Constitution deals with the third branch of the government, the judiciary. The US Constitution provides explicitly only for the highest court of the country: "The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish."²

At present the whole system of federal courts consists of a Supreme Court at the top, next in rank being the 11 Courts of Appeals; these are followed by 89 District Courts in the 50 states and the District of Columbia plus 4 Territorial District Courts (Guam, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Canal Zone). Besides these courts a number of courts with special jurisdiction have been created by Congress, such as the US Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, the US Court of Claims, the US Customs Court, and the Tax Court of the US.

The Supreme Court of the US stands at the head of the system of federal courts. It consists of one Chief Justice and 8 Associate Justices (fixed at this number since 1869). The appointment of Judges to the Supreme Court is made by the President of the US with the consent of the Senate. The judges are appointed for life; they hold their offices "during good behavior" and may be removed from office only by an impeachment procedure. By his right of appointment of the members of the Supreme Court the President has the power to influence legal proceedings in the US sometimes over an extremely long period.³

Removal by impeachment is very rare, and has been undertaken only a few times in American history. The nomination of conservative and reactionary judges may exercise a significant influence on the political life of the nation because of the powers of this institution. So may the nomination of liberal judges: e. g. the appointees of President F. D. Roosevelt to some extent protected civil liberties in the late 1950s and early 1960s against increased reaction in the lower courts.

The function of the Supreme Court in the system of division of powers is to interpret the law and to guard and interpret the Constitution (Judicial Review). In some cases, as defined in Article III, Section 2 the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction, i. e. "in all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a state shall be a party". The Supreme Court handles offences against federal law or treaties, disputes between states, and controversies to which the US or a foreign nation or citizen is a party.

The Supreme Court is also the highest appellate judicial body of the nation and has the authority to decide which of the lower court cases it will accept for review whenever the loser appeals for such a review. These cases involve questions of law and constitutionality and may come to the Supreme Court from the inferior federal courts or from the state courts.

The Supreme Court is in session from October to July of the following year. The decisions of the Supreme Court are final. They may only be superseded by another Supreme Court decision.

As members of the third branch of government the justices of the Supreme Court receive high salaries—the Chief Justice receives an annual salary of \$65,600, the Associate Justices receiving \$61,000 (figures from 1976).⁴

The most controversial power of the Supreme Court is its prerogative of examining the constitutionality of legislation, called the judicial review of legislation.

Nowhere in the Constitution is this political power of the Supreme Court mentioned. Chief Justice John Marshall (1801–35) assumed and, by his action, established the Supreme Court's right to review acts of Congress and State legislatures. This power has been widely criticized in the US. Judicial review as it now exists in the US gives the Supreme Court the authority to examine and to decide whether actions of the legislative and executive institutions of the Government conform to the US Constitution. If the Court decides they do not they can be declared unconstitutional and are thereafter illegal. This refers to both federal and state legislation. The Supreme Court has been able to use this power of interpreting the Constitution to an extent which has given it a decisive influence on the political, social and economic life of the country as well as on the activities of Congress and President.

Before the Civil War (1861–65) the Supreme Court was dominated by representatives of the Southern states and many decisions of the Supreme Court in those years consolidated the institution of slavery. One example here is the Dred Scott Case (1857) in which the Supreme Court ruled against a former Black

slave's plea for freedom under the Missouri Compromise (which forbade slavery north of Latitude 36°30'). The Supreme Court held among other things that a Black was "a person of an inferior order", that no Black could be an American citizen and therefore could not sue in a federal court; that Blacks were slaves and the property of their owners no matter whether they were in a slave or free area of the country. Practically this meant that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. This fateful decision sharpened the contradictions between the Northern and the Southern states, which eventually led to the Civil War.

Since the rise of monopoly capitalism the Supreme Court has usually been the instrument of big business. A very significant period in the history of judicial review was the time between 1935 and 1937 when in twelve decisions the court declared much of the New Deal legislation of President F.D. Roosevelt to be illegal, thus preventing legislation aimed at controlling the economy. Only after Roosevelt had the chance to appoint 8 liberal judges to the Court did its decisions take a somewhat different turn. The long fight of Civil Rights organisations like the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and others, the active service of Black soldiers in the US Army during World War II and during the Korean War, the struggles of the Black population and their white allies in the USA and the mounting international pressure led to some progress in overcoming racial discrimination in some areas of American life, with the support of the Supreme Court.

A well-known example in this field is the historical decision *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) when the Court in a unanimous ruling declared that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional and had to be abolished. In 1955 the Supreme Court instructed all Federal Courts to require a start toward desegregation in the individual states "with all deliberate speed". The ruling was extended to apply to state supported colleges and universities as well as to public gathering places and common carriers. Many states refused to carry through desegregation and the vague term "with all deliberate speed" was replaced by "at once" ("immediate compliance") in 1969.

But events in the USA during the last two decades have shown that these decisions have been seldom enforced. These legal "guarantees" remain inefficient as long as the power structure of the various states is used to obstruct the application of legal gains.

The decision of 1954 against segregation and a few other rulings which strengthened the basic rights of citizens were largely the result of militant struggles within the US; they do not imply a fundamental change in the character of the judiciary. But it must be stressed that these decisions also depend to a great extent on the personal attitudes and outlook of the judges. This can be seen by rulings of the Supreme Court concerning segregation in public schools in 1973, after 4 conservative or openly reactionary Nixon-appointees had joined the Court. Their rulings against bussing mark a retreat from the 1954 decision granting equality of educational opportunity.

Circuit Courts of Appeals

The territory of the USA is divided into eleven circuits including the District of Columbia, in which the capital, Washington, is situated. Each of these circuits is under the jurisdiction of a specific court of appeal. The number of judges in each circuit varies from three to nine. These courts function as appellate courts and consider appeals in civil and criminal matters which have come before federal district courts. A court of appeal does not have a jury, because it considers only questions of law. Usually the decision of the circuit court of appeal is final although upon a further appeal a hearing by the Supreme Court is possible. The judges are appointed by the President and the appointments have to be confirmed by the Senate. Party politics again play an important role in these appointments and make a just legal system almost impossible.

Federal District Courts are trial courts and handle both the criminal and civil cases which come under the jurisdiction of the federal laws. The Constitution requires them to hold a jury trial in all cases except civil cases involving less than \$20.

They handle the following types of cases: offences against federal laws or treaties, disputes between states, and cases in which a foreign nation or foreign citizen is a party; federal criminal cases and civil cases involving more than \$3,000 are tried in District Courts.

When the federal courts have jurisdiction, the case normally starts in the District Court, and then goes, in case of an appeal, to the Circuit Court. Eventually it may go to the Supreme Court. In exceptional cases the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction (cf. Supreme Court of the USA).

For purposes of administration the territory of the USA is divided into judicial districts which do not correspond to the states although each state has at least one District Court. Appointments of judges are made by the President with the consent of the Senate.

Outside the three-step federal court system there are a number of special courts such as the Court of Claims. The special courts handle matters which require expert knowledge; they are on a border line between strictly judicial courts and the administrative agencies through which the government regulates certain kinds of business.

The States' Judicial Systems

For the average American citizen the state courts are in some respects more important than the federal ones. They handle 95 per cent of all cases tried in the USA. It is therefore necessary to look at these courts more closely since many of the cases of injustice in the USA have been tried by these courts.

Being closely observed by the whole of the USA, federal courts tend in general to proceed more "correctly" than state courts, where often shocking court

decisions are made and the racial or political bias of the judges and the jury is a commonplace.

All judicial power not delegated to the federal courts rests with the state courts. They determine the guilt or innocence of persons accused of the violation of state laws; it is their task to guard the constitutional rights of residents—non-citizens as well as citizens—and to settle all other civil disputes. They may also exercise the power of judicial review. Each state is sovereign in the organisation of its judicial system. The judicial autonomy of a state is secured as long as it respects the federal courts and laws. This gives rise to a diversity of state judicial systems resulting in almost 50 different systems of law.

The general state judicial organisation resembles the pattern of the federal system; that is, lower courts of limited jurisdiction, courts of general jurisdiction, and a high court of appellate jurisdiction. Some states have intermediate appellate and special courts as well. Despite these common principles there is a wide variation in jurisdiction, forms and methods of procedure, in the number and variety of courts and in the general pattern of organisation, which makes an accurate general description impossible. The same diversity can be seen in the selection of judges. Many states elect their judges at all levels by popular vote, in some states appointment by the governor is general, while some states use both methods. In the state systems there are seldom life appointments, fixed terms being more usual. Where judges are elected their integrity and impartiality are extremely limited since they must first be nominated by the political parties and are therefore dependent on party politics, a fact which often influences their decisions in court. The inefficiency, incompetence and general prejudice which often characterize the administration of justice in state courts have been the target of sharp criticism. The courts in many states represent the unveiled class interests of the bourgeoisie and do not even pretend to be impartial. Bribery and corruption are common features.

At the bottom of the state judicial systems are the courts presided over by justices of the peace. They are sometimes also called Magistrates' Courts, Police Courts, Mayors' Courts and the like. These courts exercise a limited jurisdiction, being normally restricted to trying petty crimes and civil cases involving a small amount of property. The judge or magistrate has very often no legal training and owes his appointment entirely to political influence. To a certain extent this is due to the historical development of the United States: a strong democratic feeling and the lack of legally trained persons in many parts of the United States led to this practice of selecting influential members of the community, even without legal training, as judges.

The courts of general jurisdiction of first instance are variously called, according to the state, "County Courts", "District Courts", "Circuit Courts", "Superior Courts" or even "Supreme Courts". They have original and appellate jurisdiction in both civil and criminal cases. In these courts the parties have the right to a jury.

In most states the judges of the trial courts are elected by the people for

limited terms and the judge has to follow the political line of his party to secure his nomination. Moreover, the judicial authorities are often politically or racially biased.

On the model of the federal courts every state has a high court of appeal, usually called the Supreme Court of the State, at the top of the legal system. This top Court exercises appellate jurisdiction over cases appealed from the lower courts and it has also the power to declare state laws unconstitutional. Its members are appointed or elected for a longer period of time, sometimes up to 20 years or even during good behaviour.

Public Prosecution

The organisation of public prosecution is identical with the principle of the whole judiciary: it is divided into the Federal Public Prosecutions and the States' Public Prosecutions. These systems co-exist in parallel usually without any connection in their work. At the top of the Federal Public Prosecution is the Attorney General, who is the head of the Department of Justice of the Union. He is the chief advocate of the USA and prosecutes in all civil and criminal actions of the Supreme Court or in cases in which a state is involved. In the states this is done by the Federal District Attorneys. The Attorney General and the Federal District Attorneys are appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate.

Injustice in the United States Legal System

Criminal procedures in the USA differ from state to state. Nevertheless some basic principles have been fixed by the Federal Constitution and the Amendments, especially the Bill of Rights (1791), and by subsequent decisions of the Supreme Court.

The Bill of Rights provides the right of the people "to be secure in their persons, houses, papers ..." and protects them against "unreasonable searches and seizures". Very often the courts have then to decide what is unreasonable. These rights of the citizens were affirmed by the decisions of the Supreme Court which ruled that even if the evidence shows a person's guilt, he must be set free if that evidence was obtained illegally.

Another part of the protection of a suspect is the requirement that he be warned by the police, as soon as he is taken, that he has the right to refuse to say anything until he is assisted by a lawyer.⁵

Excessive bail or fines and cruel and unusual punishment are also forbidden. Bail refers to the practice of releasing accused persons after they have posted a certain amount of money (fixed by the judge) as security. If the accused fails to appear in court on the date set for his trial, he forfeits bond.⁶ The Constitution

prohibits "excessive bail" but does not give defendants an absolute right to bail. It is widely agreed among jurists that since those arrested are formally presumed innocent until proven guilty, the defendant should ordinarily be given his freedom until he is tried. In practice however, bail is often set at levels higher than defendants can afford. Bail practices weigh heavily on the poor. They often cannot raise bail. Those who are put in prison because they are unable to offer bail are treated exactly like convicted prisoners and often for no inconsiderable period of time: a wait of up to six months is common. They are also placed at a great disadvantage in terms of their defense, as it is much more difficult to prepare a defense in prison than when free. Studies on the situation in the early 1960s revealed that there is a demonstrable relationship between being detained in prison awaiting trial and the likelihood of having to go to prison after the trial.⁷

Despite the legal guarantees which are supposed to secure the individual against violation of the rights by the Federal, State or local governments we find hundreds of examples of arbitrariness, injustice and outright violation of these rights in American judicial history. One example is the abuse of the right to trial by jury.

The right to trial by jury is guaranteed in federal and state constitutions. Article VI of the Bill of Rights states:

"In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed ..."⁸

The jury system consists of two parts, the grand jury and the petit jury. The grand jury only performs a preliminary function: it decides the initiation of a criminal trial. The grand jury consists of 23 members or less. If they have found reason to suspect that a person has committed a crime he is indicted and has to stand trial before a petit or trial jury which then determines the question of guilt.

If the grand jury finds that the suspicion of the crime is not well founded the defendant is discharged.

The petit or trial jury is normally composed of twelve jurors, who must reach an unanimous conclusion in capital crimes. If they disagree the defendant may be released or retried.

Some states have petit juries with less than 12 members. In 1970 and 1972 the Supreme Court ruled against the accepted interpretation of the term "trial by jury", which specified (1) a panel of 12 members, (2) supervision by a judge, (3) unanimity of verdict. The Supreme Court ruled that in non-capital criminal cases before state courts guilt may be affirmed on the basis of a majority decision of the Jury and that the jury may be as small as the state legislature decides as long as it is not less than six jurors.

The members of the jury should be chosen impartially. But all states choose their jurors in ways which in fact form a system of bias against large parts of the population. Often businessmen and professionals tend to be much overrepresent-

ed, workers and minority groups much underrepresented. In Baltimore, for example, a study found that "professionals, managers and proprietors constituted only 18.7% of the population but contributed 42% of the jurors ... At the same time 41.4% of the population were working-class people but only 13.4% of the jurors were blue-collared".⁹

Procedures for the selection of juries make equal representation nearly impossible. In almost all cases, jurors are selected from lists of registered voters. Political practice shows that poor people and members of racial minorities are less likely to register to vote and therefore are less often called for jury. Many states excuse women from jury duty. Jurors get paid for their service but a juror's pay is usually lower than a worker can earn in a day's work; so many blue-collar workers who would lose wages ask to be excused on grounds of financial loss. White-collar workers, by contrast, often continue to be paid while they serve: thus again class bias is built into the jury system. In this jury system racial prejudice dominates; in many states Afro-Americans and other racial minorities (as well as young or politically radical people) are never called for grand or even petit juries. The right to be tried by jury which has always been praised by bourgeois ideologists as a democratic principle can be manipulated and jury trials have in reality often proved to be far from just: on the contrary, they are prime examples of class justice. Added to the fact that judges are in no way impartial the composition of a conservative jury formed by well-to-do members of the community makes justice for the accused—be he Black, poor or progressive—highly improbable. The deep distrust felt by the working class and especially the Black population towards the judiciary is justified by a long history of the injustices done to them.

Many cases never come to trial but are resolved by the defendant pleading guilty, often as an outcome of a process known as plea bargaining. Defendants are often charged with multiple crimes, some of these involving much greater penalties than others. Prosecutors have the right to negotiate with defendants: in exchange for a plea of guilty on a lesser charge, the others are dropped. Where there is only one charge against the defendant, the prosecutor offers to argue for a reduced sentence in exchange for a guilty plea. Prosecutors here often act as de facto judges who make the decisions about innocence, guilt and length of sentence. Plea bargaining relieves prosecutors from having to prepare cases for trial, and it lightens and simplifies the work of the judges since all they need do is ratify decisions reached by prosecutors and defendants' lawyers.¹⁰ This process mainly benefits the authorities but does not secure justice.

When a defendant has confessed his guilt or when the jury passes a verdict of guilty the court pronounces a punishment or gives a probation sentence, i.e. it places the party involved under the supervision of a probation officer.

Quite often the sentence is more or less indeterminate. Officially it is upheld that this kind of indeterminate sentence is applied to give the party an incentive to good behavior while serving the sentence. Actually this kind of sentence is used to intimidate prison inmates and prevent them from any political activities.

It is largely up to the prison authorities to decide whether an inmate will be set free and when this will happen.

The case of the young revolutionary George Jackson is but one example of the inhuman character of this kind of sentence and how it is used in the USA today. When in 1971 George Jackson was shot by white prison guards while allegedly trying to escape from the Californian prison San Quentin, he had already spent more than ten years in prison, seven of them in solitary confinement. He had been sentenced as a youth for alleged participation in a robbery where only 70 dollars had been taken. The California Court ordered a sentence of "one year to life imprisonment". For George Jackson, who became a revolutionary and freedom fighter in prison, there was no chance to get free.

Especially Blacks are discriminated against in the law courts; they are arrested, sentenced and sent to prison more often than white people; in most cases, they are neither tried by Black juries and Black judges nor represented by Black lawyers. A few figures show their gross underrepresentation in the judiciary and law enforcement: according to official statistics, in 1970 only 3,000 out of 300,000 American lawyers were Black, among 93 US State-Prosecutors none was Black, among 459 federal judges only 22 were Black, and among 12,000 state and local judges only 178 were Black.¹¹

Crime has become one of the most urgent problems in the USA today. One simple fact is revealing: New York City has about the same number of murders each year as the whole of Europe.¹² Official FBI-statistics give a total of 11.2 million reported crimes for the year 1975. Between 1960 and 1975 crimes in the United States had more than tripled. The FBI-Crime Index for this period shows that violent crimes (murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault) increased by 356.3%, property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft) increased by 330.4%.¹³ Even then it is estimated that less than half of the crimes actually committed are reported to the police. The former Attorney General Ramsey Clark noted in 1970 that almost all these crimes are committed for the purpose of obtaining money and property; about seven-eighths of the FBI-Index Crimes are crimes against property. Yet many of the relatively hidden crimes which the judiciary constantly ignores—most of them "white collar crimes" like tax evasion, embezzlement, price-fixing and consumer fraud—are much more profitable than those that command most police and media attention. Clark stated: "Illicit gains from white collar crimes far exceed those of all other crimes combined ... One corporate price-fixing conspiracy criminally converted more money each year than all the hundreds of thousands of burglaries, larcenies or thefts in the entire nation during those same years. Reported bank embezzlements cost ten times more than bank robberies each year."¹⁴

In this respect crime does pay in the USA today. The same is true of the many illegal activities run by organized crime, like drug traffic, gambling etc., which are highly profitable businesses. The reasons for the alarmingly rising crime rate are manifold, but essentially this development is rooted in the social conditions of the capitalist system. Social inequality and insecurity, unemploy-

ment which is especially high among youth and racial minorities, racism, and poverty are major causes of crime. Crime thus reflects the decaying social system in the USA. Historians have also called attention to the record of violence in the United States, not only evidenced in war and civil disorder but in the perpetuation of the frontier doctrine that every man is entitled to take the law into his own hands. This belief is exemplified among others in the widespread ownership of handguns in the United States and in their frequent use. Because of organized opposition to gun-control laws, Congress has been unwilling to place effective restrictions on the possession of handguns.¹⁵

Many of the inmates of US-prisons are poor, ill-educated, unemployed and have been in prison before; a high percentage of prisoners are Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano or Indian. The prison guards are mostly white. A systematic reign of terror, brutalities, indignities and injustice exists in the prisons against these inmates. Racism was the central factor underlying prison revolts like that in Attica in 1971. These events revealed the role of the prison system as an instrument of class and social oppression. This is underlined by the ever growing number of political prisoners in the USA.

"The infliction of brutality, terror and violence on Black Americans has by no means lessened; only its forms have changed. In place of the mob lynchings of former times, today we witness 'legal' lynchings in the name of 'law and order'."¹⁶

"Law and order" is marked by the killing of Black and white students as in Kent State University in 1970, by the frame-ups and murders of Black Panthers, by the attempted frame-up of the Black Communist Angela Davis, by the assassination of George Jackson, or by the frame-up of the Wilmington 10. The Civil Rights fighters who became known as the Wilmington 10 are political prisoners: nine Afro-Americans and one white woman, who were framed and sentenced to long prison terms in 1972. Despite widespread protests in the United States and abroad, the Supreme Court refused their appeal for a new trial: although the prisoners had to be released "on parole", they still have to fight for their complete rehabilitation and full acquittal.¹⁷

This is in effect a new form of lynch justice, a legal lynching by the authorities. Lynch justice which has been common in parts of the USA at all times is a lawless form of "capital punishment" of alleged criminals by private persons, usually mobs. In the United States it was used mainly against Afro-Americans but also against other minorities and even against white persons who for political or other reasons had attracted the attention of the mob. The terror of the Ku-Klux-Klan is but one example in the long list of legal and extralegal crimes against innocent people, committed by the legal institutions themselves or covered up or tolerated by them. Since the early 1950s direct lynchings have ceased, while individual terror has taken the form of assassinations, bomb explosions and the like.

A standard method used by racist and reactionary forces in the USA to destroy

ideological dissenters is the so-called frame-up. A frame-up is a legal conspiracy against persons falsely accused of a crime with the help of false evidence, perjury and the like. Actually these persons are charged because of their political convictions or activities. In American judicial history we find dozens of these anti-working class, anti-Black, anti-Communist conspiracies.

In 1915 Joe Hill, the working class poet and labour leader was charged with murder, sentenced to death and executed. The great trade union leader, Tom Mooney, was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment on trumped-up charges in 1916, but he was finally released as a result of a long popular campaign after two decades in prison. The frame-up of the Italian anarcho-syndicalists Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco became world-famous, evoking world-wide protest. Yet in 1927, after six years in the death cell, they were executed for a murder of which they were innocent. In 1953 Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, American Communists, died in the electric chair after they had been unjustly convicted of espionage for the Soviet Union. They were killed despite proven perjury and false evidence, despite a world-wide campaign to save their lives. All these examples of terror trials show that the American law courts are nothing but a system of tyranny of the ruling class against the American people.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) The persecution of the Communist Party in the 1950s and 1960s may serve as a further example for this practice of using the formal judicial system to crush organized political opposition by legal means. A legal basis for this political prosecution is conspiracy. Conspiracy laws make it a crime to conspire to commit certain acts, whether or not the acts are carried out. Throughout the nineteenth century conspiracy laws were used to prevent workers from organizing unions and workers were convicted on charges of criminal conspiracy for trying to organize a union. After the Second World War conspiracy charges were made against members of the Communist Party, anti-Vietnam-war activists, Black militants and civil rights fighters. About 150 leaders of the Communist Party—top Communist leaders as well as local officials—were arrested under the Alien Registration Act (Smith Act) and many of them indicted and sentenced to prison for between two and eight years. Cf. *Anspruch und Wirklichkeit. Zweihundert Jahre Kampf um Demokratie in den USA: Dokumente und Aussagen*. Hsg., eingeleitet und kommentiert von E. Brüning, Berlin 1976, p. 457. The same happened under the Internal Security Act (McCarran Act, 1950). Up to the 1960s the Supreme Court consistently held that this anti-communist legislation was constitutional. Only after long struggles by the CP and other progressive people did the Supreme Court reverse these decisions and finally ruled that these Acts were unconstitutional and therefore illegal. (Cf. *Judicial Review*).
- 2) Constitution of the United States of America, Article III, Section I.
- 3) The power of the President to influence legal proceedings in the United States is extended by his right fixed in Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution "to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States".
- 4) *Time*, New York, January 1, 1977, p. 35.

- 5) In the case *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966) the Supreme Court stated that confessions obtained under interrogation from criminal suspects were not admissible as courtroom evidence unless the accused person had been informed of his right to remain silent and be represented by a lawyer.
- 6) *Fincher, E. B.*, *The Government of the United States*, New Jersey 1976, p. 254.
- 7) Cf. *Katznelson, I./M. Kesselman*, *The Politics of Power*, New York 1975, pp. 337/338.
- 8) Constitution of the United States of America, Amendment VI.
- 9) Cf. *Katznelson, I./M. Kesselman*, op. cit., pp. 343/344.
- 10) *Ibid.*, p. 339.
- 11) Cf. *Time*, New York, April 1970, (Special Issue). This situation has essentially not changed, although an increasing influence of Afro-Americans in the judiciary can be seen by the following figures which the *International Herald Tribune* published in 1974: according to this newspaper there were 325 Black judges in American courts in 1974, which marked a fourfold increase over the previous decade, when there were about seventy. But Blacks still account for only two or three percent of the nation's judiciary and are for the most part concentrated in cities. Cf. *International Herald Tribune*, February 25, 1974, p. 7.
- 12) *Fincher, E. B.*, op. cit., p. 231.
- 13) *The U. S. Fact Book 1977*, New York 1976, p. 153.
- 14) *Clark, R.*, *Crime in America*, New York 1970, p. 38. quoted in: *Katznelson, I./M. Kesselman*, op. cit., p. 333.
- 15) *Fincher, E. B.*, op. cit., p. 233.
- 16) Main resolution of the 20th Convention of the CPUSA, New York 1971, p. 29.
- 17) For details of the case of the *Wilmington 10* see: "Freiheit für die *Wilmington 10*", in: *Horizont*, Berlin, 6/1978, pp. 4/5.

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The Military-Industrial Complex in the USA

According to UN estimates, world annual spending on armaments in the middle of the 1970s ran to \$350,000 million. 20 million people were diverted from productive labour to military service and 50 million, including more than a quarter of the total number of scientists and engineers, were engaged in military research, development and production.

At the World Conference for Disarmament and Détente in Helsinki in September 1976 it was noted that 15 grammes of explosive were enough to kill a human being and that the stockpiles of nuclear bombs and warheads accumulated throughout the world amounted to an equivalent of more than 15 tons per head of world population.¹

Disarmament is the crucial problem of our time, the most pressing of current issues, the most momentous problem in world affairs.

The biggest obstacle, however, is the US military-industrial complex. The initiatives in disarmament have been continuously made by the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. Any progress made in disarmament has been made in the face of massive opposition from the US military-industrial complex. The high profits gained from the post-war arms race exceed those made in prewar fascist Germany. Thus business interests, the political interests behind parties and pressure groups who desire a continuation of imperialist cold war policies, continue to place obstacles in the path of détente. The military-industrial complex, which swallows up billions of dollars and the energy and talent of the nation, remains a decisive force steering US policy along lines damaging to the vital interests of the American people, as well as to the peace and well-being of other nations.

Agents of the giant US monopolies hold positions of command in the machinery of the state and are responsible for the aggressive tendencies in US foreign policy, receiving from the treasury vast allocations for armaments, for military bases scattered all over the world, for the maintenance of a huge army, and for pursuing aggressive wars. Similar trends are to be found in a number of capitalist countries but it is in the United States that the interests, aims and ambitions of the magnates of business and the military élite are most tightly interlinked.

In his book "Imperialism Today", Gus Hall says of the military-industrial complex:

"It is a description of the high level of militarization. It has resulted in the intertwining of the huge military establishment with the massive banking and industrial corporations. It is a powerful complex. It dominates every phase of life in the United States. It is not a healthy

influence. It distorts and corrodes all processes. It reflects the decaying element of capitalism. It is the militarization of life."²

It was former US President Eisenhower who first coined the term "military-industrial complex". In his farewell address as President, delivered on January 17, 1961, Dwight D. Eisenhower said:

"We have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions . . . We annually spend on military security alone more than the net income of all the corporations. Now this conjunction of immense military establishment and a large armaments industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political and even spiritual—is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the federal government. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society. In the councils of government we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will continue to persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted."³

The power of the military-industrial complex extends to many spheres of American society. It commands the economic life of whole cities and regions. It intervenes in intellectual and academic life through research grants, "think tank" projects and selective subsidies to universities. Key branches of industry like aerospace, electronics and shipbuilding are dependent on military procurement. Seventy-six industries are classed as defence-oriented. Aircraft manufacturing and shipbuilding monopolies derive more than half of their income from defence contracts.

The danger inherent in the rapid growth of militarism and the influence it exerts not only on the US economy but on the political and ideological spheres as well is a much discussed subject in US political writing as is shown by a number of studies on the military-industrial complex and its role in US life. This indicates above all the deep concern felt by many Americans over the unprecedented growth of militarism and its invasion of the policy-making sphere.

The US spends a higher percentage on defence than other NATO partners. In 1976 it was 5.9 per cent of the total national output against 4.9 per cent in Britain and 3.7 per cent in the Federal Republic of Germany.⁴

In 1974 sales of the electronics industry to the Government totalled more than 11 billion dollars, that of the aerospace firms 15 billion dollars and the shipbuilding industry had orders of more than 27 billion dollars for the years ahead. Unfilled orders for defence products totalled 25.5 billion dollars in 1975.⁵ So the future for defence oriented firms looked good even at the height of the economic recession when other firms with primarily civilian production had grave problems, when

millions of workers were unemployed, when some of the biggest cities were near bankruptcy, when inflation was rising steeply. Here the parasitic character of the MIC can be seen most clearly.

The enemies of détente propagate the idea that disarmament will cause increased unemployment and that armaments production stimulates the economy. Certain labour union leaders support the MIC in the use of this social demagoguery. But the US scene shows there are millions unemployed in spite of a high rate of armaments production. Moreover even American researchers have shown that with the same amount of money more work-places could be created in civilian industries than in war industries.⁶

Another subject of discussion was the assertion by proponents of the MIC that scientific and technological findings in military research also help the civilian industries. Special studies to prove this assertion have shown the contrary. Military research and armaments production are so highly specialized that the use of their findings in civil industries is very limited. A study of the Pentagon for the years 1945–1965 (Project Hindsight) showed that only 5% of the findings in military research and production could be used in civil industries.⁷

According to calculations by the US economist Kenneth Boulding the annual growth rate of the economy is reduced by 2% and personal consumption of the population by 15% due to military spending.⁸

The war industry is subsidized by the government on a scale unprecedented in the history of either the US or any other country. And whenever international tension looks like easing and the arms race abating, the military-industrial complex intensifies its efforts. It is in this context that the armsboosting campaigns have to be seen. With a budget that accounts for a large part of all government spending, the Pentagon is a veritable goldmine for the arms monopolies. Naturally they don't mean to part with such profits.

The lion's share of the profits from war contracts is pocketed by the biggest monopolies, which compete with one another for the most lucrative contracts. It is the Pentagon that picks the winner in this fierce competitive struggle but it is the American tax payers who pay for all of it.

“Billions of dollars taken in taxes from the entire nation are poured into the coffers of giant corporations. Working people pay in higher taxes and prices. They pay in the mounting deficit of necessary public services—education, health, transit, recreation—and in the choking off of social welfare expenditures. Government has become an economic agency for taking from the poor to give to the rich. This is the real nature of state monopoly capitalism”, states the programme of the CPUSA.⁹

The Pentagon each year awards between 40 and 50 billion dollars in contracts to over 20,000 prime contractors and an estimated 100,000 subcontractors. Profits are achieved on one and the same product both by the prime contractors and

the subcontractors. The prime contractors profit even on the profits of their subcontractors.

As the American Government spends billions of dollars on arms of all kinds there is stiff competition not only among the arms producers but also among the armed services and among politicians. There is a cut-throat competition for this vast market, for the lucrative defence contracts, for the decision on which weapons are to be produced, the numbers and the producers. The winning of the air force competition for the fighter F-16 by General Dynamics Corporation was called the richest military contract in aviation history. The figure of potential sales was given at 25 billion dollars.¹⁰ This was not only a victory for General Dynamics over its competitor Northrop but also a political victory for Texas over California where the F-17 would have been built. Military outlays are not confined to weapons and personnel. There is also an enormous amount of construction work for airfields, harbour facilities, missile bases, testing ranges, civil defence facilities, strategic roads, barracks, hospitals, warehouses, depots, power stations, family housing, and production, research and administrative centres on the thousands of military bases in the USA and in many other countries of the world.

Components of the Military-Industrial Complex

Components and supporters of the MIC in the USA are the following institutions and organizations:

- banks which are main participants in the production of armaments through loans;
- industrial corporations mainly producing war materials (Lockheed Aircraft, General Dynamics, McDonnell Douglas, Boeing, United Technologies, Rockwell International, Grumman Aircraft, Northrop, Hughes Aircraft, Martin Marietta, Bendix Raytheon);
- armaments divisions of conglomerates (Ling Temco Vought, Litton Industries) and primarily civilian firms (General Electric, American Telephone and Telegraph, Westinghouse Electric, Sperry Rand, General Tyre and Rubber, Textron, Chrysler, General Motors);
- the Department of Defense;
- the intelligence agencies: Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA);
- members of Congress with close connections to the armaments industries or whose states have a high proportion of armaments production (especially California, Texas, New York, Missouri, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Massachusetts, Virginia);
- members of the US government, mainly of the State Department, who are principal formulators of imperialist foreign policy;

- private research institutes concentrating on the development of weapons and the strategy of their use:
the Institute for Defense Analysis (for the Pentagon), the RAND Corporation (for the Air Force), the Research Analysis Corporation (for the Army), the Operations Evaluation Group (for the Navy), the Hudson Institute, etc.;
- scientists of various universities taking part in military research (the Lincoln Institute of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Jet Propulsion Institute of the University of California, the Center for Strategy and International Studies of the Georgetown University, the Foreign Policy Research Institute of the University of Pennsylvania, etc.).

These are the main components of the MIC in the USA. Apart from these there are a number of ultra-right groupings and organizations which support the MIC.

Supporters of the MIC are also to be found among labour union leaders who see in armaments production a means of job security and high wages for their members.

It is, however, important to differentiate between essential parts of the MIC and those persons, groups, organizations and institutions which are used and abused by the MIC.

Legislators and the MIC

Ralph E. Lapp considers American legislators—at any rate a large part of them—to be linked with the MIC. He sees the military-industrial complex as “a geometrical figure, a triangle whose sides are represented by the Pentagon and by industry and whose base is the US Congress. Enclosed within this triangle are the defence personnel and industrial employees in the defence-based business”.¹¹ Politicians who have won most government (and this means primarily military) contracts for industries in their states have the best chances of being elected to the US Congress. Many Senators and Congressmen have close links with war production.

Military installations and industries can be found in all the fifty states and in 363 of the 435 congressional districts.¹² Contractors and service associations employ professional lobbyists to influence the legislators. The Pentagon alone has a legislative liaison staff of over 300 persons, and a public affairs staff of over 4,000 persons spends millions of dollars influencing the public.¹³

The Defense Secretary and other officials of his department lobby actively to secure Congressional support for the Pentagon's plans. Receptions and briefings are arranged at the Pentagon for legislators, where they are impressed that it is

"impermissible" to make any cuts in spending on the military machine. US Senator Gaylord Nelson complained in the Senate that

"... an established tradition ... holds that a bill to spend billions of dollars for the machinery of war must be rushed through the House and Senate in a matter of hours, while a treaty to advance the cause of peace, or a program to help the underdeveloped nations ... guarantee the rights of all our citizens, or to advance the interests of the poor must be scrutinized and debated and amended and thrashed over for weeks and perhaps months."¹⁴

Military Officers and the MIC

The intensified arms race since the end of the Second World War and the militarization of the US economy have led to an emergence of a close alliance between arms-manufacturing monopolies and top-ranking officers of the armed forces. This alliance is based on government contracts for arms production securing vast profits for the corporations and hand-outs for the military men who help them.

Between the Pentagon and the death merchants there is an intimate relationship. The well-known American economist Prof. J. K. Galbraith formulates it as follows: "The military power is a collation of generals and conniving industrialists. The goal is mutual enrichment; they arrange elaborately to feather each other's nest"¹⁵

Monopolies hire high-ranking retired military officers to use their connections in the Pentagon in securing contracts for their firms. Senator Proxmire discovered that the leading 100 defence contractors in 1969 employed 2072 retired officers of the rank of colonel or Navy captain and above. These 100 corporations in the same year received 67,4% of the money spent on war production, namely 38,8 billion dollars. The ten leading corporations employed 1065 former officers: Lockheed 210, Boeing 169, McDonnell Douglas 141, General Dynamics 113, North American Rockwell 104, General Electric 89, Ling Temco Vought 69, Westinghouse 59, TRW, Inc. 56, Hughes Aircraft 55.¹⁶ One of the aspects of the military-industrial complex is the ease with which military officers retire and move into big jobs in the defence industry, and vice versa, high ranking civilians in defence or defence-related industries move into the Pentagon—and out again into industry.

Growing numbers of high ranking officers of the US armed forces after retiring from the services go right back to work for the US government in civilian jobs. In 1974 an estimated 100,000 people out of 2.8 million federal employees were retired members of the armed forces. The number and influence of the ex-military people were never so high in civilian jobs before. "All

over Washington, we're seeing more and more military men taking over official positions" declared retired Admiral Gene R. LaRocque, head of the Center for Defense Information.¹⁷

Research and Development

During the ten years from 1969 to 1978, the US Government spent a total sum of more than 96 billion dollars on military research.¹⁸

More than half of the research and development funds spent in three leading growth industries, i.e. electrical equipment and electronics, communications equipment, and aircraft, came from the Pentagon. 1,400 corporations, 300 university centers and 200 nonprofit research organizations deal with military problems and accept research contracts.¹⁹ The RAND Corporation alone had a staff of 1,100 persons of whom 600 were research professionals.²⁰

Some scientific institutes and university research centres literally depend on the money provided by the Pentagon for research and development of weapons. Many scientists, often the best brains, work in military research, lured into this field by higher salaries. More than fifty per cent of the US government's spending on research is devoted to military purposes.

The Office of the Director of Defense Research and Engineering (set up in 1958) has 80 major and a large number of smaller laboratories and research centres employing a total of over 30,000 research scientists and technicians. Furthermore the Office supervises a great number of researchers in private companies.²¹

Cost

Each new generation of weapons costs two or three times more than the previous one. The cost of armaments has skyrocketed over the past few years. Since the Second World War fighter planes, for instance, doubled in cost about every four years.

Here are a few examples of prices in 1978:

F-14 Tomcat (Grumman Aircraft) = \$ 20 million. The Navy ordered 521 planes. F-15 Eagle (McDonnell Douglas) = \$ 17 million. The Air Force planned to buy 729 planes. F-16 (General Dynamics) = \$ 10 million. Ordered by the Air Force, With other countries also expected to make purchases, total sales may reach 2,000. F-18 Hornet (McDonnell Douglas and Northrop) = \$ 12 million. Total sales could reach 1,300 planes.²²

It is quite common for costly programmes to be declared obsolete and dropped to make way for even more costly new long-term programmes. In late 1969 Senator Proxmire's subcommittee conducted hearings which caused him to describe the military-industrial complex as a "Wasteland". For instance, \$ 1,300 mil-

lion was sunk into a guided flying laboratory project that was dropped in 1968. Millions were spent on the MBT-70 tank before work on it was discontinued. Two missile projects which swallowed up \$2,000 million were dropped when it was found that the weapons would be obsolete before they got off the production line.²³ And there are countless similar examples.

In 1977 President Carter cancelled the production of the B-1 bomber after 4,000 million dollars had been spent on the development of this expensive and controversial plane.²⁴ This cancellation was justified on grounds of cost criteria. Whereas the B-1 bomber would have cost over 100 million dollars, a cruise missile will be available for 750,000 dollars and costs far less to maintain.²⁵ Its "cheapness" makes mass production possible and means an acceleration of the missile race.

Arms costs are soaring far beyond the original estimates. This "cost overrun" is a characteristic of American arms production, the rule, not the exception. Often firms underprice their bids to win contracts against their competitors.

Cost overruns on a massive scale are hitting virtually every major weapon on order by the Pentagon. In December 1977 it was reported that for the 47 principal weapons programmes being acquired by the armed forces, the original combined cost estimate of 110.4 billion dollars had climbed to a current estimate of 179.6 billion. This was an increase of 63 per cent since the programmes were approved.

This overcharging is due to the absence of any real control on the part of the government agencies. The military contracts are in effect wholly risk-free, since all possible losses are covered by the government. Here are a few examples of such cost overruns:²⁶

	<i>original estimate:</i>	<i>estimate at end of 1977:</i>
Trident Submarine	\$723 million	\$ 1.2 billion
Spruance-Class-Destroyer	\$ 81 million	\$126.5 million
B-1 Bomber	\$ 45.6 million	\$101.7 million
Main Battle Tank	\$720.000 million	1.1 million
Nimitz-Class Nuclear Carrier	\$685.6 million	\$ 1.2 billion
F-15 Fighter	\$ 9.8 million	\$ 17.4 million

The Myth of the "Soviet Menace"

The production of bombers, fighter planes, aircraft carriers, destroyers, atomic powered submarines, intercontinental ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and tanks, first and foremost means profits for the arms producers and the arms merchants, the merchants of death.

The money for all these unnecessary products is at the expense of the American people as is obvious from the lack of money for health programmes, housing, social security, unemployment relief and education.

The population is constantly told that raising the military budget is a life-or-death issue for the USA, that more money should be spent on nuclear and conventional weapons to meet the "Soviet threat". It is common for the military establishment to produce statistics intended to incite fear, especially in the autumn when it is drawing up the next defence budget for Congress. The colossal progress in industry and technology in the United States is used largely for an unprecedented escalation of arms production. The Pentagon demands ever new types of mass destruction weapons and the monopolies are eager to get military contracts.

In order to justify the expenditure of many millions of dollars at the cost of the living standard of the working class, big lies about a military threat to the USA from the Soviet Union are invented and an atmosphere of fear is cultivated by the mass media. The proponents of the MIC work consistently hammer into the minds of the people the spectre of "Soviet aggression", Soviet superiority in missiles, warships, aircraft, tanks and other weapons. The aim is to step up hysteria to acquire more contracts for the production of war materials.

Commenting on the scare campaign by means of which the military were seeking to secure the passage of the new budget, the "Washington Star-News" wrote in 1973 that "The Defense Secretary wants us to believe the Russians will quickly have Berlin and Boston and Baltimore if he spends anything less than 79 billion dollars this year."²⁷ Samuel F. Downer, one of Ling Temco's vice presidents, said "We are going to increase defense budgets as long as those bastards in Russia are ahead of us".²⁸

The enemies of peace are waging a bitter war against détente and the assertion of the principles of peaceful co-existence in international relations. Especially after the successful conclusion of the all-European Conference in Helsinki in 1975, the reactionaries and militarists at once switched their propaganda machines into top gear.

Détente and the MIC

The first half of the 1970s was an extraordinarily important period during which the effects of the cold war were diminished and co-operation between the states of the two world systems tended to replace confrontation. The basis was laid for major steps towards security and a lasting peace in Europe and the world over.

This was opposed to the interests of the reactionary forces in the USA and especially to the interests of the MIC, who see in détente a threat to their positions both at home and abroad. After a decline in its political influence following its fiasco in Vietnam, the US military-industrial complex again emerged into the foreground of US life. A broad anti-détente campaign was vigorously conducted.

Former President Ford even officially erased the word *détente*. Since 1976 the US military budget has again risen steeply, not only in current prices but also in comparative indices, i.e. taking inflation into account. The MIC started a new round of the strategic arms race by launching the intensive development of the cruise missile. Another striking example is the development of the neutron bomb based on the principle of the mass extermination of people but simultaneous "preservation of material values". Demagogic efforts were made to prove the neutron bomb to be "clean" und "safe" inasmuch as its impact is limited to a relatively small area and exterminates "only" human life and leaves buildings intact. It was said to be a weapon that can be used in a limited war.

The production of these weapons further complicates the problem of how to avert a nuclear holocaust. The construction of the neutron bomb will not make nuclear war more "humane" but clearly increases the danger of war and makes the use of nuclear weapons more likely. The US plans for the production of neutron weapons and their deployment in Western Europe has given rise to a world-wide wave of protest. The neutron bomb has aroused the biggest wave of protest in the United States since the mass campaigns against the dirty war in Vietnam.

The proliferation of cruise missiles, described by militarists as a miracle weapon which can be launched from the ground, from aircraft, ships and submarines, means in effect the opening of a new fourth channel of the strategic arms race (after the intercontinental missiles, ballistic missiles based on submarines, and heavy bombers). The decision on the mass production of cruise missiles has created a new situation, complicating still further the reaching of agreement at the Soviet-American strategic arms limitation talks (SALT).

The Pentagon's militaristic manipulations to step up the arms race cannot but cause concern among all who are striving to abolish the danger of a nuclear catastrophe. Even in the US many people are convinced that there is a real alternative. The real security of the country rests not on the development of ever more sophisticated arms systems but in an agreement that will reduce the overkill capacity of the nuclear stockpiles.

More and more Americans think that the American government has spent too much money for the wrong purpose in the wrong places. Several recessions, high inflation rates, devaluation of the dollar, bankrupt cities, unemployment, soaring medical costs, escalating living costs, economic insecurity, budget deficits, high taxes and insolvent school systems have convinced many American citizens that their country can no longer afford the arms race and the propping up of unpopular governments around the globe.

Increasing numbers of Americans—workers, politicians, businessmen, young people—are demanding a more realistic approach to world developments. There is a growing feeling that the emphasis should be on negotiations, the settlement of outstanding issues by peaceful means.

Clearly, the military-industrial complex and its allies are a force which must be reckoned with seriously. But at the same time it should be borne in mind that

the influence of the MIC on US political life is not unlimited. The policy pursued by its leaders is aimed at upholding the interests of an influential section, as yet still only a section of the American bourgeoisie. The programme of those American politicians, public leaders and business sectors who demanded an end to the Vietnam war and who are now opposed to the arms drive and support the development of Soviet American relations on the basis of the principle of peaceful co-existence, differs from and is often opposed to aggressive policies. The Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties held in Berlin in 1976 declared:

"The arms race must be ended and a process of reducing armaments must be initiated. The growing arms expenditure bears down more and more heavily on the working people and the mass of the people. If these huge resources were spent on raising the living standards of the people, on overcoming economic backwardness, on aid and support for the developing countries and on environmental protection, this would immensely benefit the advance of all mankind".²⁹

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Cf. New Times, Moscow, No. 40, 1976, p. 5
- 2) Hall, G., *Imperialism Today*, New York 1972, p. 101.
- 3) Eisenhower, D. D., "Farewell Radio and Television Address to the American People, January 17, 1961" in: *Public Papers of the President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1960-1961*, Washington, D. C., 1961, pp. 1035-1040.
- 4) Cf. U. S. News & World Report, May 16, 1977, p. 20.
- 5) Cf. U. S. News & World Report, September 29, 1975, p. 81.
- 6) Cf. Perlo, V., "Friedensdividende zahlt sich aus" in: *Horizont*, Berlin, No. 8, 1977, p. 24.
- 7) Cf. Kuczynski, J., "Wissenschaft und Rüstung" in: *Jahrbuch für Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 1973, T. 1, Berlin 1973, pp. 22-23.
- 8) Cf. IPW-Berichte, Berlin, No. 2, 1975, p. 6.
- 9) *The New Program of the Communist Party, USA*, New York 1970, p. 20.
- 10) Cf. U. S. News & World Report, January 27, 1975, p. 68.
- 11) Lapp, R., *Arms Beyond Doubt. The Tyranny of Weapons Technology*, New York 1970, p. 121.
- 12) Cf. Proxmire, W., *Report from Wasteland. America's Military-Industrial Complex*, New York 1970, p. 110.
- 13) Cf. Russett, B. M./A. Stepan (eds.), *Military Force and American Society*, New York 1973, p. 198.
- 14) Quoted in: Galbraith, K., *How To Control The Military*, New York 1969, p. 38.
- 15) *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 16) Cf. Pursell, C. W., *The Military-Industrial Complex*, New York 1972, p. 254.
- 17) Cf. U. S. News & World Report, July 15, 1974, p. 45.
- 18) *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Washington, D. C., November 7, 1977, p. 14.
- 19) Cf. Clotfelter, J., *The Military in American Politics*, New York 1973, p. 108.
- 20) Cf. Klare, M. T., *The University-Military Complex*, New York 1969, p. 20. RAND stands for Research and Development.

- 21) Cf. *Faramazyan, R. A.*, USA: Militarism and the Economy, Moscow 1974, p. 123.
- 22) Cf. U. S. News & World Report, January 9, 1978, p. 54.
- 23) Cf. New Times, Moscow, No. 13, 1971, p. 31.
- 24) Cf. New Times, Moscow, No. 32, 1977, p. 11.
- 25) Cf. Morning Star, London, August 25, 1977, p. 2.
- 26) Cf. U. S. News & World Report, December 12, 1977, p. 37.
- 27) Quoted in: New Times, Moscow, No. 49, 1973, p. 18.
- 28) Quoted in: *Galbraith, K.*, op. cit., p. 32.
- 29) New Times, Moscow, No. 33, 1976, p. 4.

Further Reading

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The Major Parties, and the Two-Party System

Parties in the United States are political organizations which unite the most active members of one or several classes under a recognized leadership and behind a platform or programme developed by their ideologists. They aim at enforcing those conscious class interests that have come to dominate them, and they do so by trying to preserve or ultimately achieve sole or partial control over the state apparatus. The parties pursue this course by means of force and/or democratic (nominating and electoral) procedures conducted by a relatively small and disciplined membership with their own resources and by exercising an extensive control over a mass of followers who are entitled to vote. The parties' organizational basis and force are therefore extra-governmental.

The major parties of the United States have never been membership parties. They are electoral parties. Although voters registering with a major party in order to vote for its candidates are considered to be members for the time of the election, membership in a strict sense is largely confined to a bureaucracy of functionaries. Public activities outside the state apparatus have thus been concentrated on securing an extensive vote-winning control, but not on enrolling members. Since party platforms with noncommittal promises on current issues have proved sufficient for electoral purposes, no major party has developed a comprehensive and obligatory sociopolitical programme.

The Major Parties, 1789–1865

A two-party system in the sense of a bourgeois class rule operating through two major parties did not exist until after the Civil War (1861–1865). Till then the USA was a nation divided into two different and increasingly antagonistic social systems: the Northern capitalist and the Southern slave systems.

Prior to the Civil War the major parties developed in two phases. During the first phase from 1789 to 1816 the two major parties were the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists (officially named Republicans in 1794). The Federalist Party was controlled by representatives of Northern commercial, bank and early industrial capital, and by a few Southern plantation owners. It was the first governmental party and its leaders encouraged commerce, banking and industry to the complete disadvantage of all agrarian producers, including the Southern plantation owners. Moreover they oppressed the post-revolutionary democratic mass movement.

The Anti-Federalist or Republican Party was chiefly agrarian and led by Southern plantation owners together with a few Northern capitalists. Since the

US was still overwhelmingly agrarian and the Republicans were supported by the post-revolutionary democratic mass movement oppressed by the Federalists in the interests of an essentially capitalist class rule, they defeated the Federalists. From 1800 onward the Republicans controlled the state apparatus and finally, after constant defeat, the Federalist Party died after 1816.

The second phase began between 1824 and 1828 when the Republican Party split into two factions which, gradually assuming separate organizational status as National Republicans and Democratic Republicans, eventually came to call themselves Whigs and Democrats in the 1830s. The split was caused by the swift economic and political ascendancy of the cotton-producing Southern plantation owners and by the effects of the industrial revolution in the North.

The two parties resembled their predecessors. The Whigs were the party of most capitalists and wealthy farmers, while in the 1840s the plantation owners seized complete control over the Democratic Party, through which they controlled all three branches of government. Thus throughout both phases the essentially agrarian-led party (the Republicans and later the Democrats) controlled the state apparatus most of the time.

In both party leaderships the three most important and economically inter-dependent classes (capitalists, slave plantation owners and wealthy capitalist farmers) were represented, so that although their degree of representation varied, neither of the parties exclusively served the interests of classes belonging to either system. That is why neither of them was able or willing to cope with the issue of slavery when its solution became vital in the 1840s and 1850s—although both of them split into factions opposing, tolerating or demanding the extension of slavery.

A politically organized anti-slavery movement was formed outside these two parties when the small Liberty Party, aiming at the abolition of slavery, was founded in 1840. The movement broadened when also people who were only opposed to the extension of slavery joined in the formation of the larger Free Soil Party in 1848, and it culminated in 1854/56 with the formation of the mass-based Republican Party which elected Abraham Lincoln President in 1860. It was only during the Civil War that the Republican Party matured politically and pursued the abolition of slavery. The greatest control over this party soon came to be exercised by those Northern industrialists who were interested not in cotton but in the labour and natural resources of the South.

The formation of the Republican Party and the victory of the capitalist North in the Civil War destroyed the old major parties and, in opening up the South to capitalist development, established the basis for the modern two-party system which is still operating today. The Whigs did not survive the revolution. With the destruction of the plantation owners as a class (the new ones came to work their plantations on a capitalist basis), the Democratic Party's leadership and class character changed almost completely. After the Civil War both parties, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, came to rest on a national capitalist basis. They were controlled by one class: the bourgeoisie.

The Two-Party System, 1854/65 to the Present

First Phase, 1854/65—1892/96

Once the antagonism between North and South subsided, the class struggles of workers and farmers against the capitalists caused the bourgeoisie to create a two-party system as an instrument of class dictatorship. Lenin wrote: "Since the emancipation of the Negroes, the distinction between the two parties has been diminishing ... Their fight has not had any serious importance for the mass of the people. The people have been deceived and diverted from their vital interests by means of spectacular meaningless duels between the two bourgeois parties. This so-called bipartizan system prevailing in America and Britain has been one of the most powerful means of preventing the rise of an independent working-class, i. e., genuinely socialist party."¹

Set in the period of transition from laissez-faire capitalism to monopoly capitalism, the first phase produced and consolidated the two-party dictatorship and fortified it against disruption by a national third party of the people. Growing working-class and farmer movements produced in the 1880s an anti-monopolist farmer-labour movement uniting Negroes and Whites, North and South, and culminating in the mass-based third party, the Populist Party, founded in 1892. This party, polling 1.5 million votes in the mid-term elections of 1894, threatened the dictatorship function of the two-party system.

The elections of 1896, completing the first and introducing the second phase of the two-party system, consolidated a number of characteristics which were to determine the future operation of the two-party system:

1. In "adopting" anti-monopolist Populist demands, the Democratic Party was the first that learned to neutralize strong working-class and farmer movements by reformist tactics. Since then both parties, especially the Democrats, have used this method successfully. The Populist Party fell for this new ruse, endorsed the Democratic platform and candidates, thus committing suicide as a party. Its members were absorbed into the two-party system. The largest third-party movement in the history of the US was thus destroyed.
2. In the South the Negroes and most poor whites, many of whom had been Populists, were disfranchised by terror and state laws. The massive enfranchisement of Negroes finally occurred only in the late 1960s.
3. As the so-called Solid South the Southern electorate came under the monopoly control of the Democratic Party (Republican votes soon becoming an ineffective minority), while the Republicans for the time being erected a virtual monopoly in the North, especially in the rural areas. With no large third party existing, this North-South division broke the movements of farmers and workers in two. Though somewhat weakened, the Democratic dictatorship in the South still exerts a decisive influence in present-day elections.

4. The Democratic monopoly became one of the pillars of the legislative coalition between reactionary racist Southern Democrats and the Wall-Street-backed Republicans, especially those in the North-East. To this day this coalition has been chiefly responsible for killing progressive reform bills in Congress.
5. The effectiveness of the North-South division was further ensured by the class-collaborationist AFL leaders who, in 1895, officially resolved to support only Democratic and Republican candidates and never third parties. This policy of union leaders has been one of the mainstays without which the two-party system could not exist today.
6. In the offensive to conquer the farmer-labour vote by terror and manipulation the Republican Party's political boss, the monopolist Marcus Hanna, organized the first nation-wide collection of campaign funds from industry. Since then increasing campaign expenditures have been a prominent feature in US elections.

In many respects the first phase of the two-party system was the most fundamental of all.

Second Phase, 1892/96—1928/32

Continuing with the above mentioned features, the second phase was marked by the rise of US imperialism. The Republicans remained the leading party most of the time, but the policy of imperialist expansion was just as effectively pursued by the Democratic Party under President Woodrow Wilson from 1913 to 1921. With the beginnings of state monopoly capitalism the role of the professional party politician somewhat declined. Monopolists took over government offices in person. President Hoover appointed, for instance, Andrew Mellon (a leading finance magnate in industry and banking) Secretary of the Treasury.

Farmer and labour third parties continued largely on a state level outside the South. They were smaller, confined to the North, and hampered by Republican dominance, by the AFL leaders' treacherous policy, and by a reformist dexterity which gave leadership factions within the two-party system a new significance.

In the elections of 1912 the presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, Eugene V. Debs, polled over 900,000 votes: the largest number ever won by a working-class candidate. Even more important was, as Lenin put it, the "unusually clear and striking revelation of bourgeois reformism as a means of combating socialism."² The Democratic presidential candidate, W. Wilson, was the first to have to hide his connections with the monopolies (he was a Morgan man) in order to secure working-class votes. The Republican Party split over tactics. William H. Taft became the candidate of their openly conservative faction. The more flexible Theodore Roosevelt promised stronger legislative measures against "bad" trusts. He was supported by the faction of Progressive Republicans, who came largely from the agrarian Middle-Western states.

After the Populists the next large farmer-labour movement, the LaFollette movement of 1924, was based in the Middle-West, Republican-led, much more reformist, confined to the North, and as a potential third party sabotaged by the AFL leadership (which expressly confined its support only to the presidential candidacy of LaFollette). What was new was that the Communist Party (founded in 1919) took part in the movement until it was officially excluded. After the October Revolution in Russia and during the formation of the CPUSA, anti-Communism had been successfully intensified by the bourgeoisie in the period of the terrorist Palmer raids.

Since 1920 Communists had taken part in forging an alliance among various organizations, particularly in the Middle-Western states, with the aim of forming a politically independent party. But continued anti-Communist actions and the illusions among organized workers and farmers finally led to the nomination of the Progressive Republican, Robert M. LaFollette, as presidential candidate. The Communists refused to support him and set up candidates of their own, thus separating themselves from the movement instead of continuing to function as its left wing. La Follette's nomination proved once more how important reformist factions had become for the stabilization of the two-party system. The movement's majority were not ready to break with it, and the young Communist Party still suffered under "leftist disorders" (Lenin).

Third Phase, 1928/32 to the Present

Beginnings of the third phase made themselves felt in the elections of 1928 when the quickly growing large metropolitan areas with a chiefly working-class vote began to shift from the governing Republican Party to the Democrats. The crisis of 1929/33 accelerated this trend, and in 1932 the majority of workers, having no large third party of their own, voted for the Democratic presidential candidate, Franklin D. Roosevelt, thus breaking the Republican predominance which dated from the elections of 1896.

For the development of the two-party system the 1930s introduced a number of changes, many of which continue to characterise the system up to the present day:

1. The crisis caused the more farsighted members of the bourgeoisie to stabilize capitalism by regulations and administrative institutions which led to the formation of state monopoly capitalism as a system.
2. A state monopoly policy which included federal reforms making concessions to the working class, small farmers and Afro-Americans came to be the new form of Democratic Party reformist (or so-called neo-liberal) policy. Roosevelt's neo-liberal New Deal probably saved the two-party system by making concessions to a militant working class and its unions, thus tying their votes to his party. A similar, though perceptably weaker state monopoly reformism (or so-called neo-conser-

vatism) was grudgingly adopted by the Republican Party only after the Second World War, notably during the second half of the 1950s.

3. Campaign expenditures and organized political support from the large union federations, first from the CIO (founded 1935/38) and, especially after the war, from the AFL, became much more important for major party victories than before. With this phase the working-class vote became the most decisive. Once and for all it left the farmer vote, which had been stronger in the Populist and LaFollette movements, behind it.
4. For the first time since the Civil War the Democratic Party would not have needed the Southern vote in order to win the elections of 1932, 1936 and 1940: the Northern working-class and small-farmer votes within the two-party system had grown so strong.
5. For the first time since the Civil War the Black vote in the North went Democrat in 1936, most Blacks having become workers.
6. Since the breaking of Republican predominance in both houses of Congress in the 1932 elections, Democratic neo-liberalism and—in the absence of a national third party—the votes of the (organized) working class, the small farmers and ethnic minorities have ensured Democratic predominance in Congress up to the present day, excepting the years 1947/49 and 1953/55.
7. Rightist Northern Republicans and reactionary Southern Democrats began to work together with fascist organizations, opposing among other things state monopoly reformism. This collaboration became more important after the Second World War, particularly from the 1960s onward.

The late 1930s and the industrial boom during the Second World War diminished the economic pressures which, together with the struggles of the working people, had forced the Democratic leadership to make concessions. New Deal reformers who were largely Democrats lost ground, and reactionary Republicans and Southern Democrats gained strength while the working people made sacrifices under a no-strike pledge in order to raise production for the anti-fascist war.

When war-time exertions ceased in 1945, the polarization of forces immediately became effective: millions of workers struck for higher wages, many demanding restrictive measures against monopolies; Blacks who had fought on the home front and abroad demanded civil rights. The experiences with a strong union movement, the working-class vote and with the limited powers of Southern Democrats during the 1930s influenced the major parties' tactics, which were designed to paralyse all democratic movements at home and cement the hegemonic, anti-Soviet position of the US within the capitalist world. In both parties the right-wing forces dominated, producing in Congress the antilabour Taft Hartley Act of 1947 and the bipartisan Vandenberg resolution of 1948, advocating a military bloc against the Soviet Union.

The offensive was not yet victorious. Cold war politicians had not had the time to disorientate the American people completely. The Republicans set up a reactionary platform in the elections of 1948, but the Democrats split, and a minor faction led by the former New Deal Vice-President and cabinet member, Henry Wallace, founded the Progressive Party. This third party was actively supported by the CPUSA. It condemned anti-Communism and advocated friendly relations with the Soviet Union. It also demanded a civil rights act and the repeal of the Taft Hartley Act. Sabotaged by the AFL and CIO leaders (some CIO unions nevertheless supported it), the party polled only 1.15 million votes, about half of Debs' vote in proportion to the size of the electorate.

Mindful of the working-class and Black votes, the successful Democratic presidential candidate, Harry S. Truman, demagogically resorted to reformist promises, telling the people he would have the Taft Hartley Act reconsidered in Congress and propose a civil rights act. His latter promise made Southern Democratic leaders "bolt the party". In five Southern states they founded a reactionary, racist third party, the States' Rights Democratic Party (better known as the Dixiecrat Party), nominating Strom Thurmond (South Carolina) for president.

While the congressional coalition of reactionary Republicans and Southern Democrats dated back to the 1880s, the States' Rights Party was a new development. For the first time Southern Democrats organized themselves outside Congress in order to help the Republican candidate win; they knew that Thurmond had no chance of carrying the elections.

In the following years—during the height of the cold war and fascist McCarthyism, and during the relative prosperity of the 1950s with the working-class sorely weakened by anti-Communist hysteria and anti-labour legislation—even tactical differences between and within the two parties approached zero: the bipartisan policy which had, for instance, produced the Taft Hartley Act and the Vandenberg resolution prevailed. Nothing changed here when, after twenty years of Democratic administration, the Republicans took over government under President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953.

From the second half of the 1950s to the mid-1960s working-class discontent slowly rose, the Black liberation movement spread from the South to the North inspiring the students' movement, and the first, temporary steps were made towards détente. Tensions within party leaderships sharpened and broke out openly with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and in the elections of 1964.

So far both parties' right-wing forces had worked together in Congress and collaborated with the increasing number of fascist organizations, but the Republican strategy of winning Democratic leaders and voters in the South had made little progress. However, unlike the 1930s, the Democratic Party could not afford to lose Southern votes. In the 1964 elections it nominated Lyndon B. Johnson (Texas) presidential candidate. He came from the South (which was why Kennedy had chosen him vice-presidential candidate in 1960) and had succeeded Kennedy in office. The fascist Senator, Barry Goldwater (Arizona), ran on the Republican

ticket. In answer to this rightist extremism the majority of the American people elected Johnson.

With the deterioration of the social situation at home and the decline of the international position of the US during the second half of the 1960s and the early 1970s the Congressional coalition continued and the parties' more or less clandestine collaboration with fascist organizations increased. But it was not until 1972 that the coalition reappeared outside Congress. In 1968 George C. Wallace, Governor of Alabama and then the head of the fascist American Independent Party, had run for president, polling a disquieting 9.6 million votes. Now, in 1972, he campaigned on the Democratic ticket. Like the States' Rights Party in 1948, his aim was to strengthen the Republican candidate, if he could not win the election himself. Yet, unlike Thurmond, his latent fascist and his racist slogans were successful South and North. When he withdrew from the race, after having been shot and partly paralysed, most of those who had voted for him in the primaries went over to the Republican, Richard M. Nixon. Pro-Republican activities among Southern Democrats were a prominent feature in these elections.

The presidential elections of 1972 were in so far not quite typical as the differences between the successful Republican candidate, Nixon, and the Democratic candidate, George McGovern, went deeper than usual, owing to the politicizing effects the US aggression against Vietnam had finally had on the electorate. That such temporary developments can be reflected even within the historically obsolete two-party system is chiefly due to the character of the two parties and their traditional electorates. Fundamentally both have the same class character and are monopoly-ruled. But all crises (especially the 1930s) have time and again magnified their secondary differences.

Of the two parties the Republican Party is, on the whole, the more stable one. Compared to the Democrats its number of moderate and neo-conservative officials is smaller. Young liberal cadres hardly embarrass older conservative ones. The support the party's youth organization gave to the nomination of Goldwater in 1964 showed strong fascist forces at work among the younger generation. The mass of the Republicans' traditional electorate is middle-class: people who, though yearning for some kind of reform, have been manipulated to associate change and reform with instability, the betrayal of the "good old" individualist bourgeois values (the so-called "rugged individualism"), with radicalism and even with crime. Its leadership is not split between Northern and Southern Republicans, and the tensions between neo-conservatives from the North-East and "individualist" rightists from the Far West have, as yet, not led to a split. Its financial resources are larger, because, on the whole, corporations and banks prefer to make their contributions to the Republican fund. 95% of all financial support for both parties comes from them. Its chief electoral weakness is the low average percentage of workers voting Republican. Its electoral success does depend on winning such votes, but its electoral stability is bourgeois. It rests with the middle class.

Like its predecessors (the Federalist and the Whig parties), the Republican Party is more homogeneous than the Democratic Party. Its internal cohesion and the majority of its voters are less subject to the social polarisation which has been increasing since the 1960s. This made for a greater stability at the time of the 1972 elections. The Democratic Party, on the other hand, had been going through a severe crisis.

The majority of workers who register with either party vote Democrat. Moreover, union campaign expenditures for the Democratic Party as well as the percentage of workers taking part in elections and voting Democrat have both risen with the degree of union organization. Although their militancy has been rising since the late 1950s, the overwhelming majority of workers have not yet developed a class consciousness. In most cases voter absenteeism is the answer of those who are disgusted with the Democratic Party. They do not call for a third party. The majority of Blacks (and other ethnic minorities) also vote Democrat. Ever since the elections of 1960 the votes of this largest minority of the US have acquired a weight neither of the two parties can ignore. Thus the Democratic Party has to cope with the two inter-related movements which have the greatest revolutionary potential.

The large working-class and Black votes have a certain influence on the number and nature of Democratic liberals. If critical members of the bourgeoisie more easily gravitate toward the Democratic Party, they are more inclined to make minor concessions to workers and Blacks than those preferring the Republican Party. More often than not younger women and men from the middle class will become active in, or vote for, the Democratic Party. They are less strongly integrated into the social system, have fewer biases and privileges and therefore more to win by reforms.

The party's leadership is split between Northern and Southern Democrats. In periods when the party is forced to assume the role of a reform party in order to tie working-class and Black votes to the two-party system, safely established Southern Democrats cause more trouble than conservative Northern ones in the obstruction of tactics designed to neutralize discontent among workers, discriminated ethnic minorities, and even among parts of the middle class. Conflicts over such matters can go deep, not because the party's class character is questioned but because the main source from which it is parasitically sucking its electoral strength may be at stake.

Intensified by the aggression against Vietnam, the crisis in the Democratic Party broke out openly during the infamous National Convention of 1968 in Chicago. Police terror against anti-Vietnam-war demonstrators helped the right-wing Democrats (the bloc of old machine Democrats, Dixiecrats and most of the AFL-CIO-leaders) to defeat the younger liberal functionaries and their candidate for nomination, Eugene McCarthy. But the problems of social versus military priorities in politics and the demands for democratizing party reforms remained as urgent as ever.

Inner party reforms, which became effective for the first time in preparation of

the 1972 National Convention in Miami Beach, led to a number of victories of liberal over right-wing Democrats, and they also brought about a rejuvenation of party cadres. The progress liberals made was most clearly revealed in the composition of the Convention. The percentage of women, Blacks and youth rose remarkably. But if the reforms gave liberals better opportunities to support their candidate, Senator George McGovern, they did not change the monopoly-ruled character of the party. Big business had McGovern water down his liberal platform and make compromises with the right wing, and the 1976 National Convention in New York was, even for US standards, notably conservative.

The elections of 1976 were in so far a return to "normalcy" as the presidential candidates (Gerald Ford, Rep.; James Earl Carter, Dem.) resembled each other. Congressional results brought no shift to the right or left.³ The nomination of Carter from the Deep South (Georgia) continued the Southern trend; the rivalry between the conservative Ford and the rightist Reagan continued the tensions between North-East and Far-West Republicans; George Wallace's racist primary campaign continued earlier ones. But the return to "normalcy" in the face of the continued crises that have beset the US, especially since 1969, was a sign that the two-party system was losing flexibility. Militaristic budgets having depleted the resources for state monopoly social reforms, neither party offered anything approaching the concrete demands of the electorate, and for the first time in US history the campaign finally propagated the more promising Carter as the "lesser evil".

The majority have stopped expecting solutions from two-party politicians. Voter participation has declined: 1968: 60.7%; 1972: 55.4%; 1976: 53.3%.⁴ In 1976 about 34% of the electorate registered as "independent"⁵, thus refusing to vote for either party, and the former Democrat McGovern ran as an "independent", receiving 700,000 votes in 29 states.⁶ In heroic struggles the CPUSA has managed to put its presidential and vice-presidential candidates on the official ballot lists in an increasing number of states: 1968: 2; 1972: 15; 1976: 19 states.⁷ As yet it is neither the pace nor the political effectiveness of these very different trends but their steadiness which is significant. Absenteeism out of disgust, "independent" voting and campaigning, and the struggle of the CPUSA reveal very different levels of reaction against the two-party system.

History suggests that the Republican Party's chances of surviving a disruption of this system are greater. Ever since the 1880s the Democrats have been the party more often threatened by working-class followers turning away in order to vote for early Socialist candidates like Eugene Debs, or in the attempt to found a strong national Party of their own. Still trying to channel discontent, the Democratic Party is concentrating, and in elections dependent on, those parts of the electorate capable of disrupting the two-party system. Yet unlike the 1880s the present time is not only ripe but overripe for the progressive forces—including the absentee and "independent" voters—to overcome their fragmentation, and, as the CPUSA advocates, to form a People's Coalition Party.

Appendix

Table

Major Parties and Two-Party System, 1789 to the Present

Major Parties

1789–1865

Phase I	1789–1816	Federalists (1789–1816)	Anti-Federalists (1789–1794) Republicans (1794–1824/28)
Phase II	1824/28– 1854/65	National Republicans (1824/28–1830s) Whigs (1830s–1854/65)	Democratic Republicans (1824/28–1830s) Democrats (1830s–1865)

Two-Party System

1854/65–today

Phase I	1854/65– 1892/96	Republicans (1845/65–)	Democrats (1865–)
Phase II	1892/96– 1928/32		
Phase III	1928/32– today		

Footnotes

- 1) Lenin, V.I., *Lenin on the United States of America*, Moscow 1967, p. 49ff.
- 2) *ibid.*
- 3) Cf. *Political Affairs*, New York, December 1976, p. 7.
- 4) Cf. *ibid.*, November 1976, p. 2.
- 5) Cf. *New Times*, Moscow, No. 44, 1976, p. 21.
- 6) Cf. *Political Affairs*, New York, November 1976, p. 3.
- 7) Cf. *ibid.*

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The Erosion of Bourgeois Democracy and Fascist Organisations in the USA

In recent years the balance of power has changed tremendously, especially in the field of international relations. There is a socialist world system which is important not only for the part it plays in keeping peace, but also for its help to the organized working class and democratic forces in capitalist countries in their struggle for peace and democracy. In addition to this, there is a third international form of power, embodied in the young nation states pursuing the non-capitalist path and thus strengthening the progressive forces in the world. These three powers have taken the offensive. Imperialism has been forced into retreat all over the world.

The change in the balance of power to the detriment of imperialism combined with a growing uncertainty among the ruling circles concerning the future of their economic and political system has resulted in a further polarization within monopoly capital. In the forefront of the efforts of the ruling class stands the problem of how the capitalist system could be best stabilized—by liberal reforms or by increased coercion. And it is quite obvious that those forces favouring a further restriction of constitutional civil rights and promoting authoritarian ruling methods have gained ground—a development indicating the danger of fascist dictatorship.

Gus Hall, General Secretary of the CPUSA, declared at the 21st Convention of the CPUSA in 1975:

“We must keep a sharp eye on how, in the U.S. in the 70's, monopoly capital is preparing the climate in which fascism can come to power. We must keep an eye on how it is preparing a mass base which is one of the basic conditions for its victory. We must be alert to what issues are being used and what forces are moving into position ...”

There were indications of fascist tendencies in the USA as early as the beginning of the 1920s. Rightist forces of monopoly capital aimed at the destruction of labour unions which had gained some economic rights during World War I. This attack went hand in hand with a brutal political offensive by the state. Concurrent with this growing official terror were the increased activities of two rightist organisations—the Ku Klux Klan and the American Legion.

Ku Klux Klan

The Klan was founded twice. The first Klan which was marked by a deep hatred of Blacks and unrestrained terror against them was founded in 1865.

Its aim was to create a climate of fear among the Blacks which would guarantee the predominance of the plantation owners in the South. The largest membership of this Klan ran to 500,000², their activities being limited to the Southern states. After US Congress had passed anti-Klan legislation in 1871 the KKK disintegrated.

In 1915 the Klan was reestablished and became one of the most powerful organisations in the USA, its membership running to nearly six million in the mid-twenties.³ The basis remained in the South but chapters were also established in the North and on the west coast. It began to fight all liberal influences and movements of the left, especially the labour unions. Its main aims, however, were to intimidate and terrorize Afro-Americans and Jews.

1933 was a turning point in the history of the Klan. It passed a resolution saying that no longer was the persecution of Afro-Americans, Jews and immigrants its main concern but that the KKK was needed to preserve the basis of the US Constitution against the "attacks of Communism". "Communism has to be exterminated."⁴ In the '30s it became increasingly obvious that the Klan was the tool of monopolies favouring a fascist development. It violently attacked all measures of the New Deal, terrorized unionists of the CIO and the Communists in the USA.

The US entry into the war in 1941 brought about the breakdown of the KKK, which was dissolved in April, 1944. But with the beginning of the cold war and especially after the Supreme Court decision of 1954 concerning desegregation in schools the Klan became active again. Murder, arson, kidnapping, bombing attempts and torture were re-established as the standard methods of the reorganized KKK. One of the most notorious examples of its activities was the murder of three young civil rights fighters in Philadelphia (Miss.) in 1964. The Klan policy of mass terror resulted in Congress passing special laws against it in 1966. This was followed by diminished activities of the KKK which, however, have increased considerably again since the beginning of the '70s in connection with bussing (cf. "School Education in the USA"). Its membership is estimated at about 50,000 to 100,000 and its leader, Shelton, is working out a new strategy.⁵ The main threat and danger for the USA no longer comes from the Afro-Americans, says Shelton, but from the "white Negroes" (i.e. liberal bourgeois politicians who favour integration within the framework of state monopoly capitalism). In 1973 the "United Klans of America" stated that there was only one mortal enemy: Communism.

American Legion

The American Legion was founded as a war veterans' organisation in 1919. The preamble of the Legion's programme clearly reflected the political atmosphere of those days marked by the increasing terror exercised by the state against left organisations, unions, and immigrants. The preamble said that Americanism was

the love of God, the US and law and order. In 1924 a commission for Americanism was founded. The members of the Legion were forbidden to watch films and read literature containing "Communist propaganda". Black lists of film producers, journalists and writers were drawn up. When the Roosevelt Administration recognized the Soviet Union this was condemned by the Legion as a "reconciliation with Communism". Since the foundation of the UNO the Legion has demanded the withdrawal of the USA, as the Birch Society and other openly fascist organisations have also done. Many members of the Legion are simultaneously members of pro-fascist or openly fascist organisations, e. g. the Birch Society and the KKK. Its membership numbered about three million in 1968.⁶

The American Legion has a tremendous propaganda apparatus, operating more than 16,000 bases in the US and in 28 other countries, a news agency, a publishing house and a film distribution agency at the end of the '60s. Its financial assets were estimated at 300 million dollars in 1968.⁷ The Legion has an influential lobby in Congress and close relations with the Pentagon, the CIA and the FBI.

The American Legion is the biggest and one of the most influential rightist organisations in the USA. It is a centre of extremely reactionary forces and functions in a way as an organizing institution for fascist and pro-fascist associations.

The KKK and the American Legion were the two organisations in the early '20s which most obviously indicated the possibility of fascism in the US.

Fascist tendencies grew stronger during the great depression when many openly fascist organisations came into being. The crisis of 1929 caused a further polarization of class forces, especially between monopoly capital and the proletariat. Large sections of monopoly capital were afraid of losing their political and economic power and favoured a fascist development. In 1935 the COMINTERN defined fascism as "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, and most imperialist elements of finance capital".

In 1933/34 a number of openly fascist organisations appeared, the social basis of these associations being petty bourgeois elements, unemployed and farm workers, all characterized by political immaturity and a lack of class consciousness. Among these organisations were the American Defenders, the Christian Front, the Crusaders and the German-American Bund, some of them owing their existence directly to financial support from fascist Germany. The most dangerous organisations, however, were the American Liberty League (founded in 1934) and the America First Committee (founded in 1940) for they were actively endorsed by influential sections of US monopoly capital. The Liberty League was founded on the initiative of the industrialist Du Pont, and financially backed by Morgan, Rockefeller and Mellon. Its aim was to overthrow the Roosevelt Administration in the presidential elections of 1936 by supporting the Republican candidate. The League propagated an extreme anti-Communism and anti-unionism as well as racism and anti-Semitism. It disintegrated after the reelection of FDR in 1936.

The America First Committee, led by General R. Wood (he was still active in the '60s in the fascist Birch Society) and financially backed by industrialists like Henry Ford, attacked by means of a well-contrived peace demagogy all considerations of the FDR Administration to enter World War II against the Axis Powers. In this the America Firsters consciously supported the fascist states during the first years of the war. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the America First Committee was dissolved.

Characteristic of pre-war fascist organisations was extreme anti-Communism and anti-unionism, chauvinism and partly militant anti-Semitism and racism.

After the war pro-fascist and fascist forces increased their efforts to achieve a greater influence on the American people. This development went hand in hand with growing fascist trends within the state apparatus. In March, 1946, W. Churchill declared at Westminster College in Fulton (Miss.) that the Soviet Union had plans to conquer the "free world" and that a preventive war was possibly unavoidable. He called upon the USSR to give up its socialist aims. The Churchill speech ushered in the period of the cold war because the strongest and most influential sections of US monopoly capital supported this risky policy. What followed was a partly fascist development of the social and political life in the USA. The growth of fascist trends became especially evident during the era of McCarthyism. This period can be characterized as follows:

McCarthyism was a specific form of reaction from rightist forces to the aggravation of imperialist contradictions on the international level after World War II.

McCarthyism was a specific current in the US domestic politics after World War II which affected all fields of American life. It displayed a fanatical anti-Communism masking anti-democratic and pro-fascist targets.

J. McCarthy was the most notorious person of that period, yet it was not McCarthy who had produced that political climate but vice versa.

McCarthyism was based on the right-wing forces of the Republican and Democratic Parties. Although McCarthyism had no special organisations it worked through existing rightist organisations, parliamentary committees and the mass media.

McCarthyism proved to be illegal in its persecution and punishment of progressive forces and organisations, especially of members of the CPUSA, liberals and democrats.⁸

A series of laws was the legal basis for the growth of McCarthyism. In 1940 Congress had passed the Alien Registration Act (Smith Act). Allegedly designed as a measure against fascist activities, it was used above all against democratic forces. The act declared as illegal "... to knowingly or willfully advocate, abet, advise, or teach the duty, necessity, desirability, or propriety of overthrowing or destroying any government in the United States by force or violence or by the assassination of any officer of any such government; ... to organize or help to

organize any society, group or assembly of persons, knowing the purpose thereof." This law was usually applied when no clear evidence could be produced by the prosecution. The leading representatives of the CPUSA, Eugene Dennis, William Z. Foster, Steve Nelson and others were charged with a plan to overthrow the US government (1948/49). Foster later declared that the Smith Act

"... clearly violates the constitution of the United States by abolishing the right of free speech, free press, and free assembly. It is fascist through thought control."⁹

Another anti-democratic, pro-fascist law—the Internal Security Act (McCarran Act)—was passed in 1950. Here are some provisions of the law:

- the CPUSA, its members and other so-called "Communist front organisations" have to register with the Attorney General of the USA as "agents of a foreign power";
- in case of war or emergency the members of these organisations will be taken to "places of detention" (concentration camps);
- Communists are neither allowed to be members of the AFL and several organisations of the CIO, nor work in the civil services and at defense plants;
- Communists are not allowed to travel abroad.

Under the McCarran Act the Subversive Activities Control Board (SACB) was established. The commission had to supervise the enforcement of all provisions of the law. Among other democratic organisations the SACB registered were the Veterans of the Lincoln Brigade (its members had fought in the Spanish Civil War 1936–1939), the American Peace Crusade, and the National Lawyers Guild. Due to the long struggle of the democratic forces in the USA the McCarran Act had to be repealed in 1974.

The SACB was only one of those institutions which promoted McCarthyism and the fascist danger. The most notorious one of all was the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). HUAC was founded in 1938 and ostensibly had the task of investigating fascist activities. On that pretext, however, it fought, above all, democratic forces and organisations. HUAC cooperated with governmental institutions (especially the FBI) and even with fascist organisations, e.g. the Christian Front and the German-American Bund. These fascists provided the committee with lists of progressive organisations and names of their members. Among those prosecuted were Communists, liberal artists, writers, professors and others. One of the main aims was to silence critical people who were able to influence a rather large section of the American population, e.g. teachers, journalists and writers. The result of this persecution and prosecution was brainwashing and forcing the opposition into political conformity.

HUAC, renamed the House Internal Security Committee in 1969 because of growing protest against it, was finally abolished in 1974, its functions going over to the House Judiciary Committee. William Foster wrote about McCarthyism:

"This is fascism in the making, the building of a police state in the United States."¹⁰

With McCarthyism abating after 1954, reactionary trends did not cease to exist. They obviously continued in the form of the murder of civil rights fighters by racist organisations and the police, and by the brutal suppression of uprisings against social grievances, which took place in the ghettos of almost every large American city between 1964 and 1968. That period was marked by the foundation of new fascist and rightist organisations. Another characteristic of those years was the growing power of pro-fascist forces within the Republican Party, culminating in the nomination of its fascist presidential candidate Barry Goldwater in 1964. A similar example was the nomination of George Wallace as the presidential candidate for the American Independent Party in 1968. Wallace being still a member of the Democratic Party and one of its presidential candidates in 1972 is an openly fascist demagogue.

Both the nominations of Goldwater and Wallace as well as the activities of rightist forces within the Republican Party, who tried to have the arch-conservative Ronald Reagan nominated as the presidential candidate for the elections in 1976, must be seen as the attempts of certain sections of US monopoly capital to bring extremely right-wing elements to power.

After President Nixon's assumption of office, a considerable shift to the right could be noted. This was indicated by

- tendencies toward the establishment of a presidential dictatorship;
- growing official racism and a policy of "law and order";
- growing activities of fascist and pro-fascist organisations.

Tendencies toward the Establishment of a Presidential Dictatorship

The President of the United States is granted tremendous power by the constitution. This power has been extended in the course of a long process which has been especially noticeable since the end of the Second World War. The former president of the USA, Richard Nixon (1969–1974), accelerated this trend toward a presidential dictatorship more than any other president before him. Outward signs of this development were the increased numbers of private personal advisers and councils not bound to Congress by law.¹¹ By vesting the decisive political powers in the hands of these advisers and councils, and simultaneously lessening the influence of cabinet secretaries legally bound to Congress on the determination of governmental policy, the President was able to follow a relatively independent policy, largely disregarding Congress. Thus Congress's function as one of the three equal major institutions of the political federal system became increasingly ineffective, which indicated the danger of a presidential dictatorship.

Most important of the several advisory councils were, and still are, the

National Security Council, the Council of Economic Advisers, the Council of International Economic Policy, and the Office of Management and Budget.

Since the end of World War II the usurpation of political power by the President has become most obvious in the field of foreign affairs, particularly related to the question of the declaration of war. The executive has paralyzed Congress on this vital question by waging wars without declaring them (Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia). The usurpation of power by the President in this particular function is definitely illegal and contrary to Article I of the US Constitution.

The rise of presidential power to the detriment of Congress is further indicated by the increased use of executive orders and the dominant part played by the government in initiating legislation. In fact, both serve to restrict the legislative power of Congress substantially.

There has been a permanent struggle between the White House and Capitol Hill since the foundation of these institutions. Particularly since Nixon's presidency, i. e. since 1969, this struggle has intensified on questions concerning both foreign and home policies. After Nixon's forced resignation in August 1974 because of his involvement in the Watergate plot Congress has been able to regain some of its constitutional rights usurped by the executive beforehand. In general, however, the separation of powers between the executive and the legislature—as fixed in the constitution—has lost its significance within the framework of state monopoly capitalism. Under this system the executive branch—more removed from democratic influences than Congress—step by step has become the real centre for the important political, military and economic decisions made in the interest of the ruling class. This is further proof of the deep crisis of bourgeois democracy under state monopoly capitalism.

Official Racism and "Law and Order"

Under President Nixon and President Ford (1974–1976) the so-called Southern Strategy was pursued. It had been developed during the election campaign of the fascist Goldwater in 1964. This strategy aimed at undercutting the civil rights and civil liberties rulings of the Warren Court¹², at cementing an alliance with the Right wing and the reactionary Southern politicians, and at supporting the most reactionary candidates for high positions in government, in Congress and in the courts.

"Law and Order" was one of the central issues of Nixon's election campaign in 1968 when he declared again and again that the rapid growth of crime could be brought to a halt only by tougher measures taken by the state. Nixon and those forces supporting him consciously abused the wide-spread fear among the US population of becoming a crime victim. In reality the crime rate continued to increase. "Law and order" became symbolic of stepped-up repression of militant organisations demanding an end to the Vietnam aggression and full and equal

rights for ethnic minorities, and of the further restriction of constitutional civil rights.

The Southern Strategy and "law and order" formed a unit resulting in a fascist-like policy. This policy was characterized by terror against and suppression of democratic forces. It gave a much wider latitude for terror and brutality of repressive state organs against people, groups and organisations critical of the system and the government.

In the name of "law and order" a series of laws was passed which have become the legal basis for fascist-like actions of the police and other repressive institutions of American monopoly capital:

- the Wire Tapping and Electronic Surveillance Law (1968). This allows the police and the FBI to tap the wires of private persons without their knowledge.
- the No-Knock Laws (1970). These allow the police to make house searches without a warrant, even if the occupant is not at home, or does not wish to admit them.
- the Preventive Detention Law (1970). This violates the 6th and 8th Amendments, which prescribe a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury, and the protection of the right to bail.

These laws promoting the policy of "law and order" show that it is not the executive alone which encourages fascist trends but its cooperation with the legislature and the judiciary. This has also been indicated by increased efforts of Congress since the beginning of the 1970s to pass a Criminal Code bill, called S. 1437. This bill pending in the House of Representatives at the end of 1978 would result in a further restriction of constitutional civil rights and could be used to outlaw strikes and bust labour unions.

Hand in hand with this process of passing anti-democratic legislation goes the expansion of the powers and organisational structures of repressive state organs. Since the beginning of the '60s US monopoly capital has built up a perfect system of political surveillance including more than 15 federal secret services and an unknown number of similar state and local institutions. All of them are characterized by blatant anti-Communism and partly open racism.

There were several instances in which a fascist-like mentality of repressive state organs became obvious. The extermination of the Black Panther Party is one example, over 30 leading members being murdered in 1970.¹³ Another example was the massacre at Attica State Prison (state of New York) in 1971. 43 people (mostly Afro-Americans) were killed when a prison revolt was put down by the police and the National Guard. Even the bourgeois paper "The New York Times" characterized the slaughter at Attica as "... one of the most callous and blatantly repressive acts ever carried out by a supposedly civilized society."¹⁴

What is most important is that those measures against democratic forces and democratic demands have been carried out on the initiative of the highest state

officials with the support of broad sections of monopoly capital. The CPUSA stated in its Draft Theses for the 20th National Convention: "Especially pronounced is the growth of official brutality and terror ... The infliction of brutality, terror and violence has by no means lessened; only its forms have changed. In place of the mob lynchings of former times, today we witness 'legal' lynchings in the name of 'law and order' ..." ¹⁵

Activities of Fascist and Pro-Fascist Organisations

The most obvious indication of fascist danger in the USA is the existence of fascist organisations, and organisations propagating fascist ideology in some way. Their influence on certain sections of the American population cannot be ignored. What is more, the relations between these organisations and the police, the armed forces and influential rightist politicians are often very close. This has become especially evident since the middle of the '70s when a number of influential ultra-Right coalitions appeared inside and outside Congress to put pressure on liberal Senators and Representatives. These coalitions (e.g. the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, founded in 1974, and the Coalition for Peace Through Strength, founded in 1978), demanding a return to cold-war policies and a further restriction of union rights and civil liberties, openly cooperate with fascist organisations, e.g. the Birch Society. Such relations constitute a real danger. They could be the basis for attempts on behalf of US monopoly capital to establish an open fascist dictatorship.

Altogether, there are more than 1,000 fascist or profascist organisations in the USA ¹⁶—most of them operating on a local level—which are marked by especially pronounced anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, by racism and in many cases anti-Semitism. They pursue a chauvinist and anti-détente policy, and support as strongly as possible "law and order" and anti-labour measures. There are, of course, differences among the several organisations concerning tactics, but on the whole they show similar characteristics to the rightist organisations of the 1930s.

Most of the modern fascist organisations appeared after World War II in the period of the cold war, particularly after the decline of McCarthyism and the school desegregation decision of the Supreme Court in 1954.

John Birch Society (JBS)

The John Birch Society ¹⁷ was founded in 1958. R. Welch, a small capitalist from Boston, became its leader. The main task of the JBS was, as Welch declared, "to save the country from the Communist conspiracy". The National Council of the JBS consists of 26 members, most of whom are businessmen. The large majority of the Birchers comes from rural districts and territories where

religious fundamentalism has preserved its influence among the people, especially in the South and in the West. In 1972 the JBS claimed a membership of some 60,000 and annual expenditures of nearly eight million dollars.¹⁸ According to the US journalist Steven Roberts the organisation controlled 450 bookstores in 1973, "the largest bookstore chain in the country."¹⁹

The JBS publishes two journals—"American Opinion" and "Review of the News"—and a paper called "Bulletin". The first two mainly deal with current political problems whereas "Bulletin" publicises detailed programmes for the many JBS chapters all over the country.

The Society stands for extreme anti-Communism and racism as well as anti-Semitism. Presidents F. D. Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson were characterized as "Communists", the rebuking of McCarthy in Congress was called "treason". The JBS demands the withdrawal of the USA from UNO, and the breaking-off of the relations with the socialist countries. Now as ever, the Society is fighting desegregation, especially school integration.

Although the organisation has lost prestige by its attacks on leading politicians its influence among certain sections of the American population, especially the middle class, must not be underestimated.

White Citizens Councils (WCC)

The foundation of the WCC was the reaction of racist forces to the Supreme Court decision of 1954. By 1956 the Councils had spread all over the South. Their members demand the maintenance of segregation and the widening of the States' Rights which would result in greater possibilities of keeping segregation. The WCC have close relations with the KKK but they mostly use other tactics. They are not as openly violent as the Klan, their methods are more sophisticated. They mainly operate with economic pressure and political defamation. The US journalist George Thayer says:

"If the mark of a Klansman is cracking skulls, then the mark of a member of the Citizens Councils is twisting arms ... While the Klan depends on physical violence, the Councils call on their powers of economic, political and social pressure to keep the white community in line and the black one 'where it belongs'."²⁰

The members of the WCC are recruited above all from the middle class.

Christian Crusade

The Christian Crusade was founded in 1948. Its ideological basis is the connection of religion with extreme anti-Communism. Its political strategy is to "propagate religious belief and to exterminate Communism in America"²¹. In many questions the Crusade is not distinguishable from the JBS.

The demagoguery of the Christian Crusade is well received among those sections of the population where religious belief, bigotry and political ignorance dominate. What is most important is that the Crusade has one of the biggest propaganda machines of all rightist organisations.

Apart from these organisations, there are many more well-financed and well-organized groups and associations, e.g. the Minutemen with an unknown number of members well-equipped with arms. All these organisations try to foment a political climate of anti-Communist hysteria and prepare the ground for an open fascist dictatorship.

To achieve close relations between the various fascist and pro-fascist organisations is the declared aim of many leaders. R. Frankhouser, Grand Dragon of the Pennsylvania Klan and simultaneously coordinator of the Minutemen, remarked:

"I could speak on any platform of any Klan, Citizens Council or anything else in the country probably. But ... I'm more interested in engineering—engineering the movement towards a general goal, unification, if possible, unification at least of aims and ideas ... to defeat Communism ..."²²

Apart from being a member of the KKK and the Minutemen, Frankhouser belongs to the fascist National States Rights Party, and he is an active endorser of the American Nazi Party.

Particularly dangerous is the cooperation between fascist organisations and the police and high-ranking members of the US armed forces. According to various sources the influence of fascist ideology within the police and repressive state organs has increased.²³ Rightist thinking has become institutionalized in all large US police associations, especially noticeable in the International Conference of Police Associations (125,000 members in the US and Canada in 1970) and the Fraternal Order of Police (some 130,000 members). All-out support has always been given by the police to "law-and-order" politicians such as Goldwater, Wallace and Reagan. On the other hand, fascist and pro-fascist organisations give special support to those policemen who have accomplished "heroic" deeds. The JBS, for instance, had a special fund for rewarding policemen who had distinguished themselves by their use of terror and brutality against the Black Panther Party. In this way the rightist forces have gained a greater influence on the police and have promoted police terror.

Equally dangerous is the cooperation with members of the US armed forces, the most notorious example of this being "Project Alert". "Project Alert", started in 1970 by the ultra-Right American Security Council (it also initiated the above-mentioned Coalition for Peace Through Strength), is the term given to a propaganda campaign against all steps resulting in a relaxation of political tensions in the world. It is a vicious attack against any signs of an improvement of US-Soviet relations, especially against military détente. "Project Alert" which is financially backed by monopolies of the military-industrial complex is led by the American

Security Council in close cooperation with high-ranking officers serving in the armed forces, and fascist organisations such as the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade.

Another fact illustrates how far fascist tendencies have developed within state institutions of the USA. The former official of the CIA, V. Marchetti, declared that the CIA would not hesitate to use Italian fascists if Italy moved too much to the left. He also said that Italian army officers received a special training so as to be able to cope with this eventuality.²⁴

Finally, influential sections of monopoly capital are strongly interested in increasing the influence of fascist and profascist organisations on such important state institutions as the police and the armed forces. The supporters of such organisations among monopoly capital are primarily monopolies of the military-industrial complex which favour the development toward a further restriction of bourgeois democracy in view of aggravating economic, political and social conflicts.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) *The Crisis of U.S. Capitalism and the Fight Back*, New York 1975, p. 44.
- 2) Cf. *Groehler, O.*, "Der Ku-Klux-Klan" in: *Horizont*, Berlin, 10/1974, p. 28.
- 3) *Ibid.*
- 4) *Ibid.*
- 5) *Ibid.*
- 6) Cf. *Presse der Sowjetunion*, Berlin, 138/1968.
- 7) *Ibid.*
- 8) Cf. *Förster, H.*, *Der McCarthyismus und seine Auswirkung auf die amerikanische Literatur*, ed. by Fachkommission Englisch, 1970, pp. 20, 21.
- 9) *Foster, W. Z.*, *History of the Communist Party of the United States*, New York 1951, p. 510.
- 10) *Ibid.*, p. 467.
- 11) The presidential staff increased by 25 percent from 1969 to 1972. Cf. *Green, M./J. Fallows/D. Zwick*, *Who runs Congress*, New York 1972, p. 126.
- 12) Earl Warren was the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1953 to 1969.
- 13) Cf. *Sivachyov, N./E. Yazkov*, *History of the USA since World War I*, Moscow 1976, p. 375.
- 14) *The New York Times*, New York, September 15, 1971.
- 15) Draft Theses for 20th National Convention, CPUSA, pp. 20, 29.
- 16) Cf. *Plechanov, S. M.*, "Conservative Movement", in: *SSA*, Moscow, No. 2, 1973, p. 120 (in Russian); *Forster, A./B. R. Epstein*, *Report on the John Birch Society—1966*, New York 1966, p. 14.
- 17) John Birch, a fundamentalist priest, was killed in China in 1946.
- 18) Cf. *Lumer, H.*, "The Fascist Danger and Democratic Struggles in the U.S.", in: *Political Affairs*, New York, November 1975, p. 3.
- 19) *Commonweal*, March 16, 1973.
- 20) *Thayer, G.*, *The Farther Shores of Politics*, London 1968, pp. 107, 119.
- 21) Cf. *Nikitin, W. A.*, *USA. Right-wing Extremism—The Danger for Democracy*, Moscow 1971, p. 222 (in Russian).

- 22) Jones, H., *The Minutemen*, New York 1968, p. 358.
23) Cf. Turner, W., *Power on the Right*, Berkeley (California) 1971, pp. 217f.; Schomp, G., *Birchism was my Business*, London 1970, pp. 165f.
24) Cf. *Neues Deutschland*, Berlin, 28. April 1974.

Further Reading

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Lightfoot, C.: *Ghetto Rebellion to Black Liberation*, New York 1969.
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Racism in the USA

By the 15th century racism had already become a feature of primitive accumulation and of rising capitalism. It was used to justify the whites' barbarous behaviour towards non-white peoples during the period of the extensive colonial expansion of European countries. Racist ideology not only served capital in its imperialist stage as a pretext for further conquest and enslavement and exploitation of colonial peoples but in the developed capitalist countries racism also became one of the means used to increase exploitation of the working people at home and, more particularly, to divide the working people and split the labour movement.

In general, the meaning of all racist "theories" can be reduced to the following propositions: The human race is divided into "superior" and "inferior" races and social progress is due only to the efforts of the "superior" races; the history of mankind is an eternal race struggle which inevitably results in the rule of "superior" races over "inferior" ones.¹ All race theories are based on the notion of the inequality of races. This is never questioned, the efforts of racists being directed towards obtaining proof of racial inferiority which is usually based upon some physical or psychological "peculiarity".²

The aim is to by-pass such socially acute issues as racial discrimination in housing, education, employment and to prevent national self-determination. Other arguments used are that the "psychological inferiority" of a people is due to its "cultural environment", ignoring the economic relations and the class struggle.

Materialist science has proved that man is not a passive product of his environment. He is an active force influencing his environment and changing it in the process of his conscious labour activity and social practices. The dialectical interaction between man and his environment must be considered when analysing the achievements of various races. Marxist-Leninist scholars have long since exposed the class roots of racism and under socialism it is outlawed.

The Discrimination of Black Americans

In the United States racial discrimination against coloured people has assumed the most brutal forms. The contempt for people of another race is, however, displayed not only towards Black people but also to Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Native Americans, immigrants from Asian countries and even to those from Europe who are not of Anglo-Saxon origin. But the focus remains on the Black people, because they are the most numerous, because racist discrimination against

them is most persistent and yields the highest extra profits. According to official figures, in 1974 out of the total population in the United States 24 million or 11.4% were Black people.³ The discrimination of this largest minority group in North America has a long history.

The first group of twenty Africans brought to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 were not slaves but indentured servants who were treated the same as white servants. But between 1660 and 1682 special laws and codes in all the colonies changed the Black servants into slaves. The slave codes provided that Afro-Americans were to be slaves for life and that Christian baptism would not automatically assure freedom. These codes also prohibited marriage between whites and Blacks, the acquisition of property, the holding of secret meetings and other activities. The violation of these slave codes was punished by a variety of means, from whipping to the death sentence.

The apologists for Black slavery in an effort to justify their infamous practices went to the length of falsifying the Bible. The colonial period saw the emergence of the theory which held that Black slavery was preordained; that the Black people were direct descendants of Ham and Cain and other wicked characters described in the Bible; that all Black people were under a curse, that they were physically and mentally deficient and were condemned to the fate of slaves.

In the seventeenth century the number of Black slaves grew slowly, but thereafter growth was rapid due to the cultivation of tobacco, indigo, rice and cotton on the plantations in the South, so that the Black population "... in 1790 numbered slightly more than 750,000".⁵ The industrial revolution which had originated in Europe and later spread to the United States particularly affected the textile industry. The demand for cotton rose rapidly while the invention in 1793 of the cotton gin made possible a fast increase in the supply of cotton for the textile industry. More slave labour was needed and by 1,800 slaves were selling for twice the price of 1790. Though Congress passed a law that prohibited the importation of slaves from Africa, after 1807 the plantation system spread westward and by 1860 there were about 4 million slaves in the southern states. Black slavery in the South increasingly acted as a brake on further capitalist development. The colonization of the Midwest sharpened the economic and political conflict between the bourgeoisie of the North and the Southern slave owners. The crucial question was what kind of states would be created in the West, slave-free or slave-holding. The solution of this question had a direct bearing on the balance of forces in Congress and subsequently led to the outbreak of the Civil War (1861-1865).

Though slavery was abolished by the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution (1865), the emancipated slaves often worked under much the same conditions that prevailed before the Civil War. The planters set up organizations which decided that each emancipated slave daring to abandon his former master was to be killed. In 1865 a terrorist organization was founded in Tennessee that was given the name of Ku Klux Klan. This infamous organization has since become a kind of national institution. It

combined the worst features of medieval barbarity with modern methods of organization. The Klan's bloodstained record constitutes one of the ugliest chapters in the annals of American history. With the appearance of this organization the terror against Blacks came to assume a particularly large scope. Torture and burning at the stake were quite common methods of dealing with Blacks by members of the K. K. K. An idea of the scale of terror can be gauged from the fact that in the city of Vicksburg, Mississippi, two hundred Blacks were killed in a week before the local elections of 1874.⁶ Nowadays American monopolies use the Ku Klux Klan not only for massacres and repressions against Black people but also for persecuting the progressive leaders of the working-class movement. It is financed by big monopolies and operates with the connivance of state authorities and the police. There are several other organizations used to carry out repressions against Black people and other national minorities.

Soon after the Civil War the planters introduced the so-called Black Codes. These provided for a system of control of the freed slaves, forbidding them to bear arms, to own land, and to hold meetings. The 1870s saw a turn towards reaction in the South. But although the planters returned to power in all the insurgent states they failed to gain a complete victory. In particular, they failed to restore Black slavery in the South.

At the turn of the century, the United States moved into the imperialist era which was marked by an all-out offensive of the reactionary forces in every area of national life. Now the Black people confronted a powerful bloc of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the racist planters of the South. By 1900 the total economic and political life in the South was controlled by the capitalists of the North. In a period of 13 years towards the end of the 19th century about 2,000 lynchings were recorded in the South. These lynchings and the entire elaborate system of terrorizing the Black population were conceived by the bourgeoisie and the planters as an effective instrument of exerting extra-economic pressure on the Black people to make them work at much lower wages than those normally paid to white workers. But the political side of the question was just as important. By erecting a racial or a national barrier the ruling classes created particularly favourable conditions to further their class interests and to cow the Black population into submission. Having secured the full backing of the bourgeoisie of the North the southern planters succeeded in excluding all Blacks from active political life in the South. The public education system set up during the Reconstruction Period was scrapped and replaced by a system based on segregation of the Afro-Americans in education.

As in the First World War, race discrimination in the armed forces prevailed also during World War II. Up to 90% of the Black armed forces personnel were employed on arduous jobs and 10% were on active combat duty. Blacks were discriminated in many ways. Generally they were kept in separate army units, but some mixed units were formed later. By the end of the war there were over 6,000 Black officers which was less than one per cent of the Black enlisted personnel, including only one brigadier general and 10 colonels.⁷

When the war was over, hundreds of thousands of Black servicemen returned to what they had left behind at the beginning of the war: In 17 states race segregation in public places was the law; in 14 states laws were in force providing for the segregation of Blacks on public transport; race segregation in schools and other educational institutions was the law in all the southern states.

During the nearly 40 years that have elapsed since the end of the Second World War the Black Civil Rights Movement has won some important battles and the more flagrant and humiliating manifestations of race segregation were outlawed. The civil rights acts passed by Congress since the last war have formed the legal basis for further struggle by the Black people against racism in all its forms. They also helped them to gain confidence in their own strength.

On the other hand, it would be a mistake to overestimate the progress achieved by the Black population. The record of race relations in the United States indicates that between the adoption of relevant legislations and their enforcement there is a vast distance. Black people remain the pariahs of American society. They have to cope with the three-fold nature of oppression—as workers, as a racial group, and as a nationally oppressed people.

During the Second World War and after the Black population continued to migrate from the South to the North. In 1940 77% of the country's Black population lived in the South. In 1960 about 40% of the Black population resided in the North and the West and in 1970 the figure rose to 47%.⁸ The Black population of the major American cities has been growing rapidly since the last war. In 1970 Black Americans accounted for 71% of the population of Washington, D. C., 54% of Newark, 51% of Atlanta, 45% of New Orleans and 21% of New York.⁹ Black ghettos continue to spread like cancer across the United States and sharpen the contradictions between Black and white people. Blacks are concentrated in central cities as distinct from suburbs. In 1973 60% of all Black people lived in central cities, and only 16% lived outside central cities.¹⁰ The trend of industry and trade, however, is to move from central cities to suburbs and rural areas. Thus the percentage of jobs in the central cities declines and the Black population has to suffer most.

Discrimination in access to employment is one of the most severe hardships afflicting Blacks. There remain important occupations from which Blacks are almost totally barred. All the major class divisions existing within the US capitalist society are to be found among Black people. However, the significant fact about the class composition of Black people is that "... 96% of all gainfully employed Black people are wage and salary workers".¹¹ A conclusion to be drawn from this fact is that Black liberation and working-class liberation are inseparably linked. Because Black workers are subject to special oppression and exploitation, they have proved to be among the most militant and reliable in struggles against employers.

Figures provided by official statistics showed that in 1969 the per capita income of Blacks was only 54% of the per capita income of "white" people.¹² Many Black families live in central cities, where prices are higher and public

services lower than elsewhere. These facts explain why about one half of the Black population are living in a greater or lesser degree of poverty. The oppression and exploitation of the Black people and other minorities is very profitable for the capitalists, and Perlo, the outstanding Marxist economist in the United States, writes: "A roughly estimated total of extra profits made from superexploitation of Chicano, Puerto Rican, Native American, and Asian wage and salary workers in the private economy comes to \$7 billion in 1972. Added to the \$16 billion derived from Black workers makes a total of \$23 billion in superprofits from racism."¹³

The old practice of "last to be hired, first to be fired" is still the rule especially during economic crises. The weight of evidence is that discrimination against Blacks in unemployment has been increasing for the last years. The burden of unemployment is especially heavy on Black women, and heaviest of all on Black youth. Well over half of the total number of Black youth in the United States cannot find jobs. Economists and politicians have predicted that if the present situation continues, by 1980 an entire generation of young Blacks will have become adults without ever holding a full-time job. Therefore, in many of the major cities there have been demonstrations and other mass actions by Black youth demanding jobs and justice.

The Black population's low standard of living, segregation in ghettos and unemployment generates other forms of racial oppression and discrimination. Thus the educational level of Blacks is considerably lower than that of white Americans and the percentage of illiterate Black people is five times higher. Although the Civil Rights Law of 1965 confirms the Supreme Court ruling of 1954 prohibiting segregation in public schools, in the South the authorities virtually sabotage this federal law. In the North, where formerly school segregation was unknown it is becoming increasingly widespread now, although in disguised form. In order to achieve a "racial balance" in all schools, the advocates of desegregation see the solution in busing, that is, the transportation of white children by bus to schools in the Black neighbourhoods and Black children to schools in the white communities. Many white Americans, however, are opposed to having their children taken to schools in the ghetto and during the 1970s Chicago and Boston have been the scenes of serious disturbances when white racists attempted to prevent the integration of schools.

The Struggle against Racial Discrimination

In the over 200 years of existence of the United States the Black people have waged a long and resolute struggle for their rights. Bourgeois historians try to ignore the great contribution of the Afro-Americans to the democratic revolutionary tradition of the American people, but the history of the Blacks in America is one of continuous struggle against slavery and its modern form—racial discrimination.

The War for Independence (1775–1783) was regarded by the Black population

as providing an opportunity for launching a struggle for their own freedom. It has been estimated that during the hostilities as many as 5,000 Blacks fought in the ranks of the American army. Thus the Afro-Americans made an important and a direct contribution to the victory of the colonists and to the making of the United States of America. But after the war only a few thousand Blacks who had served in the revolutionary army were given freedom.

After 1783 slavery was abolished in the North; in the South, however, it continued and forced the Black people to resistance. In their struggle against slavery the Blacks usually resorted to sabotage. The fight reached a climax in 1822 when a conspiracy led by Denmark Vesey was uncovered. Another high point in the movement was the slave revolt in 1831 led by Nat Turner. The slaveholders responded to these uprisings with a reign of terror.

During the Civil War (1861–1865) the Black people contributed towards the military defeat of the Confederacy. Towards the end of the war the Federal army had a total of 186,000 Blacks. The Afro-Americans also dealt powerful blows at the Confederate forces from within: they sabotaged work on the plantations, and half a million slaves fled from their masters to the North. In the Reconstruction Period, which followed the Civil War, the Black people dealt shattering blows to the racist-inspired myths about the deficiency of the Black people. For the first time in American history emancipated slaves became active in local governments. Two Blacks were elected to the Senate, while 14 were elected to the House of Representatives.

After the Reconstruction was over in 1877, it seemed that the Black movement subjected to brutal terror and driven into the ghettos of the northern cities was destroyed once and for all. This, however, was not true. In 1905 William E. B. Du Bois was one of the founders of the Niagara Movement, a civil rights organization, which adopted a broad programme of struggle against race discrimination and segregation of the Afro-Americans in the United States. The work of this organization was carried on by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded in 1909.

The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917 marked a major stage in the struggle of the Black people in the United States to end race discrimination and segregation. In that period, however, Marcus Garvey called upon the Black masses to emigrate to Africa, thus diverting them from the struggle for their lawful rights. Garvey had a powerful following among the Black Americans, especially in the big industrial cities. Between 1915 and 1918 no fewer than half a million Blacks had migrated to the North from the South. This process continued in the post-war years and had important implications for the development of the movement against racist oppression.

The economic crisis of 1929–1933 was worldwide in scope, but it brought incredible hardships especially to the Black people of America. Hundreds of thousands lost their jobs. However, these years were for the Afro-Americans an important school of class struggle; Black workers were active in strikes, demonstrations and in movements.

The anti-fascist liberation character of the Second World War gave a powerful impetus to the struggle of the Black people. After the collapse of the colonial system of imperialism as one result of the war, as many as 80 independent states came into being. This situation and the emergence of the world socialist system have exerted a tremendous impact on the liberation movement of the Black people in the United States. The first important development in the field of race relations was the Supreme Court ruling on school desegregation in 1954.

In the postwar period there emerged new forms of struggle against racism. On December 5, 1955, the Black population of Montgomery, Alabama, began a boycott of segregated buses, which was led successfully by Martin Luther King. In 1960 the sit-ins spread rapidly over the whole South. Indeed, having despaired of legal means of solving their problems the Black people rose to a mass struggle to defeat the hateful system of racial intolerance.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference founded by King in 1957, the Congress of Racial Equality founded in 1942 and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee formed in 1960 advanced the slogan "Freedom Now" and pinned their main hopes on mass action against racism. Under the leadership of King the Black population in the South won a number of battles with the racists. On August 23, 1963 about 250,000 people took part in the march on Washington for civil rights.

The events made it plain to the authorities that now concessions had to be made to the fighters against racism. In 1964 Congress passed yet another civil rights act which declared illegal school segregation and segregation in public places, and all discrimination based on colour during elections. But it had the same shortcomings as all previous similar legislation. It remained largely on paper and could not solve the basic race problems, so that fresh race disturbances became inevitable.

Between 1965 and 1967 armed clashes between Blacks and racists broke out in dozens of cities in various parts of the country. In 1965 there were five large-scale clashes in which 36 men were killed and 1,206 wounded. In April 1968 King was assassinated. The Afro-Americans reacted to the murder with an explosion of indignation and hatred. Thousands of Blacks took up arms to avenge the killing of their leader. In April 1968 a total of 125 major Black rebellions took place during which 46 men were killed and 3,500 wounded.

King was the most outstanding leader of the integrationist trend of the Black Liberation Movement which has as its main objective the complete integration of Black people into the nation on the basis of full equality. On the other hand oppression and discrimination produced a reaction on the part of the American Black population towards forming a separate ethnic community or even leaving the United States altogether. This separatist trend included a number of organizations the best known of which is the Nation of Islam, founded in the 1930s. They propagated Black racism and advocated economic, political and cultural isolation of the Black communities.

The Black Panther Party, founded in 1966 to fight police brutality, at first

adopted a position of Black racism. But when its leaders turned to Marxism and started cooperating with white radicals it was brutally repressed. The party split into two factions. One, headed by Eldridge Cleaver, propagated guerrilla warfare, the other, led by Huey Newton, supported Black capitalism. Both factions, however, approach the solution of the Black problem in the United States in terms of race and thus prevent Afro-Americans from establishing a broad and anti-monopoly coalition with white workers. The ultra-Lefts as well as the representatives of Black capitalism reject cooperation with the progressive forces and stand on a common platform of anti-communism.

After King's assassination the Southern Christian Leadership Conference lost its influence and today it operates mainly in Georgia and some other Southern states. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was able to adapt itself better to the new situation and came to the fore again. It began to participate in mass actions and drew closer to the trade unions, though for the last years it has been in the grip of a financial crisis.

In the 1970s new Black organizations were founded, which are advocating actual equality for Afro-Americans in the economic and political life of the country. One of the largest new organizations is the People United to Save Humanity (PUSH), which was formed in Chicago in 1971. This organization, which has branches in many large cities, puts special emphasis on work among poor Blacks and the provision of more jobs.

The fight for real political equality has become one of the key issues of the Black movement. As a result of the activity of the Black population there were more than 4,200 Black elected officials in the country in 1978, about half of whom were sitting in Southern state legislatures, on school boards and City Councils. Despite different political views on separate issues, the 16 Afro-American representatives in the US-Congress in 1978 have formed a Black Caucus which acts as a kind of organizing centre for uniting the actions of the various groups and trends of the Black movement.

Especially in recent years Black leaders began to realize that it is essential to achieve cooperation with the organizations of white Americans. That is why in 1973 the National Coalition to Fight Inflation and Unemployment was formed, uniting more than 150 different Black and white organizations. That same year the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression was founded, in which Angela Davis, the courageous Black Communist who was arrested on a trumped-up charge in 1970 but set free after a powerful campaign unfolded in the country and abroad, is playing a prominent role.

The growing importance of the Black votes is reflected by the election programmes of the Democratic and Republican Parties. But in the whole of American history there has been only one political party which from its foundation to the present day has consistently advocated the rights of the Black People. The Communist Party of the USA takes into account three basic aspects of the Black question: racial, social and class. In its programme the Party points out that

"the struggle for Black liberation in the United States is today the central, most crucial issue before the entire working class and its allies."¹⁴

The American Communists hold that a radical solution of the Black question is only feasible under socialism. This being so, they emphasize the need for a parallel struggle for social and political reforms, for improvements in the social and economic status of the Black population and for revolutionary changes. At its 21st Convention, held in June 1975, the Communist Party again stressed the importance of the struggle against racism. More than 28% of the delegates were Blacks and many leaders of the Party, including its National Chairman Henry Winston, Central Committee members James Jackson, William Patterson and Claude Lightfoot, are Afro-Americans.

The struggle of the Black people for civil rights, for democratization of the domestic political scene and against aggressive foreign policy is an essential component of the movement for a solid anti-monopolist and anti-imperialist front in the United States today. In recent years the Black Liberation Movement and organisations of other suppressed minorities in the United States have made definite headway and have struck telling blows at racism. They are fully determined to put an end, once and for all, to the humiliating conditions in which they still live. In this struggle they have the sympathy and support of all progressive and freedom-loving people in the world.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Cf. *Ginsburg, W. W.*, "Die Menschenrassen und das reaktionäre Wesen der rassistischen Theorien", in: *Rassen, Rassen"theorie" und imperialistische Politik*, Berlin 1961, p. 21f.
- 2) Cf. *Weinberger, O.*, *Gegen Rassismus und Rassendiskriminierung – Kampfdekade der UNO*, (Blickpunkt Weltpolitik), Berlin 1976, p. 15.
- 3) U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1975*. (96th edition), Washington, D.C. 1975, p. 26.
- 4) Cf. *Foster, W. Z.*, *The Negro People in American History*, New York 1954, p. 38.
- 5) *Franklin, J. H.*, *From Slavery to Freedom*, New York 1974, p. 102.
- 6) Cf. *Foster, W. Z.*, op. cit., p. 327.
- 7) *Ibid.*, p. 511.
- 8) U.S. Bureau of the Census, op. cit., p. 28.
- 9) *Ibid.*, pp. 23–25.
- 10) *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- 11) *Perlo, V.*, *Economics of Racism U.S.A.*, New York 1975, p. 19.
- 12) *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 13) *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- 14) *New Program of the Communist Party, U.S.A.*, New York 1970, p. 54.

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Native Americans in the USA

Racism is the major means that the capitalist class uses to justify super-exploitation and plundering of other peoples. Racism was the ruling class rationalization for its genocidal slaughter of the Indian peoples, the original inhabitants of the United States of America. Anti-Indian racism is behind the discrimination against Indians in employment, the courts, education, health and other fields today. It means the systematic violation of the political, economic, social and cultural rights of Native Americans as national entities and individual citizens. The roots of racism are economic ones.

The original, pre-conquest population of North America is estimated as from 10 to 12 million. By 1900 their numbers had been reduced to about 250,000 due to the method of genocide of the European colonists.¹ The Indians' land and their natural resources were forcibly taken. There are only 200,000 km² of mostly barren Indian territory left. While a number of Native American tribes and nations were fully annihilated, some groups managed to survive as ethnic communities, like the 130,000 Navajo, the 72,000 Cherokee, the 60,000 Sioux, the 35,000 Pueblo, and the 25,000 Iroquois. Even a United States Commission on Civil Rights noted in 1973 that the Indian was the poorest American, the most forgotten and oppressed national minority in the country.

"Today approximately one million Native Americans are engaged in a wide range of struggles against repression, racism, discrimination and impoverishment, as well as to preserve their remaining land base and further develop their cultural heritage. The essence of the struggle for Indian liberation is the fight for the democratic right of full freedom of choice with respect to jobs, residence, education, culture and all other aspects of life."²

About 40% of the Indians live on reservations which are supposed to be for their exclusive use. The non-reservation Indians live partly in rural areas near the reservation or in urban communities, where they have been driven by economic necessity to search for a job. There is a sizable Indian population in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Omaha, Minneapolis and Chicago. In 1970, 52% of urban and over 60% of rural Indians were jobless. The unemployment figures for reservation Indians range between 50% and 90%. The major private employers of reservation Indians are farmers. They provide about 64% of their jobs, but most jobs are only seasonal, at a very low pay, and without any security measures. A few thousand full-time jobs are offered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the reservation's Public Health Service, and the

Office of Economic Opportunity. Only 5% out of a reservation labour force of 130,000 held industrial jobs in 1968.

"The social and economic conditions found on reservations are terrible; misery, suffering, graft and corruption are widespread. In terms of employment, income, housing, health and education, reservation Indians have the worst statistical measures of any section in the US population."³

The annual family income of three-fourths of reservation Indians in 1968 was below \$900, compared to about \$9,590 for the general population. Indian families living in the Pine Ridge Reservation had to live on a pittance of \$105.⁴ Most Indian homes are dilapidated, unsanitary and crowded. There are hardly any indoor bathrooms or adequate toilets. Many reservations have no running water and the only water supply is ponds, creeks and wells, many of which have been found contaminated. Poverty and ill health are behind the low life expectancy of only 44 years; there is a high death rate for children under 14, and a high suicide rate. A study on the Navajo reservation showed that 20% of Indian children suffered from malnutrition. Welfare workers prefer to take Indian children from their mothers and place them in foster homes or adoptive homes because of "neglect" or "social deprivation" rather than to improve the social situation of their families.

The average educational level of all Indians under Federal Supervision is five school years. Only 13.4% had completed eight years of school in 1970.⁵ This indicates the vicious circle created by a very limited and narrow choice of vocational training for native children. Often there is no other choice than to return to the traditional ways of life like farming, animal breeding or husbandry, or to become part of the lowest ranks of monopoly capital's industrial army of unemployed and underemployed labour. All this is behind a new wave of militancy of Native Americans that arose in the 1960s, and can be seen as part of the struggle for civil rights in the USA and the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle in the world.

Historical Aspects

It was about 30–40,000 years ago that the first people entered the American continent over a land bridge between Asia and North America. Obviously at various times other ethnic groups came to the new continent and made for a variety of cultures, knowledge, experience, customs, languages, and religions.

"In addition to total isolation from the rest of the world, the Indian peoples lost contact with each other, as they spread across the two continents ... The Indian peoples possessed neither ships, camels nor horses."⁶

In spite of these obstacles the Indian peoples developed great civilizations, most notably those of the Incas and the Aztecs, and they contributed a great deal to world culture and the welfare of the human race: they domesticated corn, potatoes, peanuts, peppers, tomatoes, pumpkins, pineapples, cocoa, and other vegetables and fruits; they cultivated tobacco, and made discoveries of at least 59 drugs that are used today in medical science.

As many as 280 distinct aboriginal societies existed in North America prior to Columbus.⁷ They spoke about 450 distinct languages. The development of Indian societies in North America was mainly at the level of clan and tribal organizations. They had adjusted themselves to the conditions of their very different surroundings.

- The hunting tribes in Alaska and the northern woodlands were nomads. Specialized in fishing and hunting they used the bow and arrow, harpoon and firedrill.
- The social organization of the Indians of the Eastern forest district was highly developed under the role of chiefs. They were farmers and hunters, best known being the Iroquois.
- The Apaches and Navahos made their home in the South, partly hunting and collecting wild fruit, partly gardening.
- The Pueblo-Indians in New Mexico used airdried bricks for building their unusual “pueblos” (one-house-villages). They planted corn, cotton and tobacco. They also knew how to make pottery and weave patterned blankets.
- The prairie-tribes were nomads. Hunting the buffalo was their source of existence. One single buffalo not only provided them with 500 kg of meat but also with the skin and bones used to produce dresses, blankets and tools.

It is therefore quite obvious that *the* Indian did not exist.

A Policy of Genocide

From 1620 to 1660 the New England settlements grew to 60,000 inhabitants. The colonists were land-hungry. The motive for the genocide against the native peoples was to dispossess them of their land and resources and to get rid of people who could not be exploited.

“The means by which the genocide was carried out were varied and included not only outright mass extermination, but also slavery and peonage, bounty-hunting (scalping for profit), massacre of women and children, death through torture, the execution of prisoners-of-war, the assassination of leaders, the scorched-earth policy of warfare, death by European-introduced diseases, the deliberate theft and destruction of

food supplies, white frontier lynch 'justice', the forced relocation of peoples, along with the secondary effects of genocide which led to the disintegration of Native American tribes, nations and confederations as viable societies."⁸

1622 marked the beginning of the century-long conflict between the Native Americans and the white settlers, one of the most shameful pages in the history of the United States. The slogan "The only good Indian is a dead Indian" was used for more than 200 years.

It is significant that when the United States achieved independence in 1783, all Indian questions became the responsibility of the Secretary of War. The pronouncement in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal" was not true for the Native Americans. They were looked upon as savages, as non-persons, not even worth mentioning. The "winning of the West" meant expansion by military force. It also meant the further reduction of the land base of the native peoples. The American government forced the Indians to sign treaties that were nothing but enormous land-robbery.

Indian Resistance

"Indian Removal" became official policy after the election of Andrew Jackson as president in 1830. The white settlers would not tolerate the rich and powerful confederations of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek and Seminole tribes, which had adopted European technology and seemed to know all the advantages of "white civilization". That is why they simply outlawed the tribal governments by passing state laws placing the Indians under the jurisdiction of the state. The forced removal of these tribes to Oklahoma, west of the Mississippi, became known as the "trail of tears". More than 4,000 Indians died from hunger and exhaustion on the way.

Desperate attempts to resist white supremacy were made by "Tecumseh", Chief of the Shawnees, "Black Hawk", Chief of the Sacs, "Osceola" who led the Seminole war in Florida and others.

It was only a short time after, in 1840, that most of the Indians were driven west of the Mississippi, when a new expedition against them started. The prairie Indians, best known among them the Sioux, got to know the white man through the Oregon and Santa Fe trails, both of which served to conquer the west. They watched him shoot down herds of buffalo through train windows with the permission of the railroad company and under the protection of the army. In slaughtering the buffalo (about 50 million), he also killed the main source of food and support of the prairie Indians. Chief "Red Cloud" began the fight against the "giant smoking snake" and against "firewater", both of which were used to weaken Indian resistance. After a triumph of his warriors it was the first time in the

history of the United States that the conditions of a treaty were dictated by the Indians. On November 6, 1868, a treaty was signed in Fort Laramie:

"From this day forward all war between the parties to this agreement shall forever cease. The government of the United States desires peace, and its honor is hereby pledged to keep it. The Indians desire peace, and they now pledge their honor to maintain it."⁹

The government had to agree to leave the entire Powder River area and the Big Horn in northern and middle Wyoming as the Sioux' own untouchable property. But the sixteen articles of that treaty were never really carried out. With the Indian Appropriation Act in 1871 the settlement of Indians on reservations began, and Indians were no longer considered as partners to negotiate with.

When the legends of gold in the Black Hills were confirmed by geologists in an American military expedition, the treaty began to get in the way. But the government needed a pretext to set the army into action. So, on December 3, 1875, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs ordered "all Indians off reservations to come in and report to their agencies by January 31, 1876, or a military force would be sent to compel them."¹⁰ All Indians found outside the reservations would be considered hostile. This amounted to a declaration of war against all independent Indians.

One of the last wars of resistance against this order was led by "Sitting Bull". He used his right as chief of his tribe and medicine man to unite all the warriors of the Dakota tribes. When in June 1876, US soldiers, including General Custer's cavalry, marched into the valley of the Little Big Horn, where they expected to destroy the main forces of the Sioux, they had to face a battle in which all of Custer's men were killed. That gave the "Great Council" in Washington the excuse to treat all reservation Indians as prisoners of war, take away the Powder River country and the Black Hills, and to take away the Indian's ponies and guns. There was no way out. In 1880 "Sitting Bull" also went into a reservation. The war against the prairie Indians had come to an end.

The Dawes Act of 1887 (Land Allotment Act) was a further attempt of the government to dissolve the structure of the tribes by dividing their common land into small parcels shared among families of the tribe to be used individually, and buying up the surplus land very cheaply.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

The last Indians were captured, robbed of their self-respect, their traditions, and the possibility of sustaining themselves. They had to depend upon the good will (or lack of it) of the US government. A Bureau of Indian Affairs was founded in 1824, to carry out the government's reservation policies. In 1849 the BIA was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior, which has to deal with problems of wild life, mineral resources, national parks and so on.

In the 58th Annual Report of the Department of the Interior, October 1, 1889, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs explained government policy, saying

"The Indian must conform to the white man's ways, peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must. They must adjust themselves to their environment and conform their mode of living, substantially to our civilization. This civilization may not be the best possible, but it is the best the Indians can get. They cannot escape it, and must either conform to it, or be crushed by it."¹¹

The role of the BIA has hardly changed since then. All transactions between Indians and non-Indians are regulated under the strict guidance of these agencies. The BIA runs their schools and the Public Health Service operates a few hospitals and other health facilities. The Indians have practically no voice in their own affairs.

The Civil Rights Act of 1924 theoretically gave the Indians outside the reservations the same rights as any other citizen of the United States. But they were not given any chance to make use of these rights. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 had the apparent good intention of encouraging self-government inside the reservations. But in practice the introduction of the tribal-council system led to betrayal, corruption and bribery of Indian chiefs, who became servants of the Federal Government. These "Uncle Tomahawks" only too often misuse their power to distribute money, organize jobs, and use their position as police for their own personal benefit, rather than to satisfy the needs of their people. "The top tribal officers are appointed by the Federal government, council members are 'elected' by hand-picked minorities, and reservation superintendents and Department of the Interior officials—all of whom are whites—have veto power over any measure adopted by the councils."¹²

It is now the general aim of the US government to assimilate the Indians into the "mainstream" of economic life and make them exploitable by monopoly capital. The prerequisite for this is to make the Indians "independent" of their tribal relations, their customs, their religions, and their land.

In order to end total dependence on the Federal government in Indian questions, the individual states were given this responsibility in 1949. In 1953 the US government passed the Relocation Act, giving the Indians the right to dissolve their reservations and to settle in the cities, and the Termination Act, which meant the annulment of all treaties signed between the government and the Indian tribes, and an end to the special status of the Indian and all protection arrangements. It was declared that the Indians today are no longer wards of the US, and are subject to the same laws as other citizens. Thus the opportunity was immediately taken to extend civil and criminal law to the Indian reservations. The Indians have become helpless victims of the courts, and in the jails of North and South Dakota, New Mexico and Arizona 35% to 50% of the prisoners in 1970 were Indians.

The government's educational program was an attempt to get the Indians to change from their old ways of life.

"Until recent years, the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs educational system relied upon the boarding school as the cornerstone of native education, the foundation for indoctrination. Generation after generation of Native children were processed through boarding schools, from the time they were five or six years old until departure or graduation, whichever came first. They became divorced from their cultures in line with the Government's master plan for the ultimate solution to the Indian problem: assimilation."¹³

There were also a few attempts to help the Indians adapt their ways to the white man's, without having to give up their traditions entirely. Some cities created relocation centres, which were mainly used to help find such things as jobs and flats. The American Indian Centre in Chicago also opened an "Indian Skill Development Institute" which offered courses in Indian Dance, Indian Art, Indian History and Indian Literature. But what good are such programs when the Indians are left isolated at the bottom of the social ladder? That is why there is rather a tendency to go back to tribal life than to cope with the realities of capitalism in the cities of the United States.

New Methods of Suppression—New Ways of Resistance

It was President Nixon who promised in 1970 that the time had come to break decisively with the past and to create conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by the Indians' acts and Indian decisions. But:

"It is no accident that during 1970 alone more than 200,000 acres of reservation lands passed from Indian ownership. Most of this land is on the west coast, mostly forest land, quickly obtained by the largest lumber companies, with the assistance of the BIA, the Department of the Interior and Congress. In other reservations the land and resources are sold bit by bit, eliminating the only means by which the tribes can survive economically."¹⁴

Big coal companies are seeking vast deposits of low-sulphur coal for strip mining. Of the 415,000 acres of reservation land of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Montana over half are now being prospected by such corporations as the Peabody Coal Company, a subsidiary of the Kennecott Copper Corporation, and therefore integrated into finance capital. Strip mining is a fast and cheap method of making huge profits by mining coal that lies directly under the earth's surface. Because the "peeled" surface is no longer protected from erosion, the land can no longer be cultivated. It is adding insult to injury for the Peabody Company to state in its contract with the Navajo-Hopi that they will "return

the premises (Black Mesa) on termination of the lease in as good a condition as received, except for the ordinary wear, tear and depletion incident to mining operations."¹⁵

In order to justify this method it seemed enough to say that some Indians do benefit from the Peabody Lease. But the hundred or so Navajos who found work do not make up for the 600 Navajos who had to leave the Black Mesa district for it to be mined.

A tragic hopelessness of Native Americans can also be seen in a "statement of the religious leaders" of the Hopi tribe:

"We, the Hopi religious leaders, have watched as the white man has destroyed his lands, his water and his air. The white man has made it harder and harder for us to maintain our traditional ways and religious life. Now for the first time—we have decided to intervene actively in the white man's courts to prevent the final devastation. This might be the last chance."¹⁶

In 1968 the American Indian Movement (AIM) was founded in Minneapolis. A pamphlet published by the Oglala Sioux about the meaning of AIM says:

"... AIM was born out of the dark violence of police brutality and the voiceless despair of injustice in the courts of Minneapolis ... And from the inside, AIM people are cleansing themselves. Many have returned to the old religions of their tribes, away from the confused notions of a society which has made them slaves of their own unguided lives. AIM is ... a religion's rebirth, and the rebirth of Indian dignity ..."

In spite of all its contradictions, AIM is a political movement, trying to unify all existing Indian organizations, and trying to improve life in the Indian ghettos. AIM grew and was supported because of successful activities in the field of local law enforcement. They participated on the "Trail of Broken Treaties" in 1972, when 15,000 Indians from all over the country came to Washington to publicise their demands. It was also AIM which gave its support during the events in Wounded Knee in 1973. Wounded Knee is a little spot in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation (South Dakota), with its 13,000 inhabitants the second biggest reservation in the United States. Wounded Knee, the site of a genocidal massacre in 1890, when 282 unarmed Indians were murdered by government soldiers, had been chosen as a symbol. It was intended to draw the attention of the American public to the situation, to force the Government to react to federal bureaucracy and corruption that controlled reservation life.

The approximately 300 Indians arriving in Wounded Knee in February 1973 demanded an examination of the 371 treaties that had been violated by the US government. They found themselves surrounded by BIA police, US troops and FBI agents. But the government could not afford a second massacre at Wounded Knee. And most of the over 400 people who had been arrested during the occupation were finally released, as not a single accusation of conspiracy, rioting,

arson and attacking government officials could be proved. The trial against the AIM-leaders Russel Means and Dennis Banks in St. Paul, Minnesota, turned out to be an accusation of the government instead of the Indians. The Indians not only felt a racist wave of terror towards them (the fascist John Birch Society called for the liquidation of AIM) but a much stronger wave of sympathy and solidarity from inside the United States and from abroad.

Clyde Bellecourt, one of the founders and a national director of AIM, explained the three-point program of the AIM:

1. "A Treaty Commission (the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations) should examine the 371 treaties the government has made (and broken) with Indians.
All treaty rights should be enforced. The Great Sioux Nation and other tribes should receive control of their treaty-determined land.
2. Repeal the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (Wheeler-Howard Act) which has been a major weapon used in robbing Indians of their land, setting up white-controlled governments on many reservations.
3. Remove the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the Department of the Interior, restructure it as an independent agency controlled by and accountable to the Indian people ..."¹⁷

The current Indian movement reflects a lot of contradictions. The main political objectives are to protect the Indians' land base and its natural resources, to safeguard their cultural heritage and rights and to secure local self-government. The Indians' opposition to the big corporations exploiting their land makes them an integral part of the anti-monopoly struggle in the United States. And the high number of unemployed Indians are potentially an integral part of the working class struggle for jobs and economic opportunity. But many Native Americans cannot see this bigger unity. They are not yet aware that they cannot win their rights and their independence by themselves but only as part of the united struggle of all the other oppressed minorities and the working class. The Native Americans themselves are not united in their thinking about how to solve their problems in general; some continue to think in very traditional categories.

Others compare the conditions of the Indian minority in the United States with those of colonially oppressed nations: economic dependence, limited sovereignty and too little land to cultivate. They even sent a delegation of Native Americans to a Conference of the United Nations in Geneva in October 1977. They accused the US government of cultural genocide and the continued violation of human rights.

The Longest Walk from California to Washington, D.C. in 1978 was also initiated in order to bring national attention to the Indians' problems and to protest against a legislation that would abolish Indian reservations and treaty rights, since rich resources have been discovered on their land.

The Communist Party of the USA during its 22nd National Convention in 1979

also dealt with the question of Indian liberation. They support the following demands:

- “1. Regional autonomy, with expanded and enriched landgrant areas to Native American Indian communities;
2. Compensatory investment of federal funds to insure rapid, accelerated (affirmative action) programs for the general, overall development of Indian communities;
3. Federal funding, as compensation to Native American Indian peoples who choose to live outside of tribal land, to meet their housing, employment, educational and health needs—until the years of forcible holding back of social and material development are overcome, and equal opportunity is realized.”¹⁸

It is emphasized that the struggle for full economic, political, social and cultural equality can not be separated from the class struggle and the overall struggle for democracy and social progress.

Only the first steps have been taken. In 1973 the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (NAARPR) was founded. This new national civil rights movement has on its program not only the broad unity of all victims of monopoly and imperialist repression, but also labour solidarity and international solidarity. It is important to note that AIM leader Clyde Bellecourt is a Co-chairperson in the Executive Committee of this organization together with the Black communist Angela Davis.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) *Lamont, A.*, “Racism and Economic Exploitation are the Problems” in: *Daily World*, New York, June 14, 1975.
- 2) “Toward Peace, Freedom and Socialism”. Main Political Resolution, 21st National Convention, CPUSA, 1975, p. 72.
- 3) *Talbot, S.*, “The Longest Ordeal” in: *Daily World*, New York, October 16, 1976.
- 4) Cf. *Lamont, A.*, op. cit.
- 5) Cf. *Native American Women*. Published by the American Indian Treaty Council Information Center, New York, 1975.
- 6) *Lightfoot, C.*, “Social Development of the American Indian” in: *Political Affairs*, New York, April 1975, p. 21.
- 7) Cf. *Native American Women*, op. cit.
- 8) *Lamont, A.*, op. cit.
- 9) *Brown, D.*, *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee*, New York 1970, p. 141.
- 10) *Ibid.*, p. 272.

- 11) *Wounded Knee*, Published by the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, New York 1974.
- 12) *Pittman, J.*, "Must Indians be left alone to oppose grabs by monopolies" in: *Daily World*, New York, April 12, 1973.
- 13) *Native American Women*, op. cit.
- 14) *Meyer, W.*, *Native Americans*, New York 1971, p. 78.
- 15) "Turning Point". *Black Mass Defense—Tucson/Arizona; Hopi Nation, Navajo Nation*, p. 15.
- 16) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 17) *Daily World*, New York, April 6, 1974.
- 18) *The Struggle Ahead: Time for a Radical Change! Main Political Resolution*, 22nd National Convention, CPUSA, 1979, p. 31.

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School Education in the USA

The Development of School Education

The rapid increase of industrial production after the War of Independence (1775–1783) stimulated the development of schools. From the very start schools in the USA have been the concern of the states and the local authorities, and not of the federal government. As a result, there is a variety of school types and curricula throughout the USA. The first law requiring compulsory elementary education for all children up to the age of 14 or 15 was passed in Massachusetts in 1852. Soon similar laws were passed by other state legislatures. By the middle of the 19th century about 60% of all children of this age group attended the free public elementary school. It was not until 1912, however, that Mississippi introduced compulsory free public elementary education, which made it the last state of the USA to do so.

In the last third of the 19th century, the USA transformed itself into a highly developed industrial and agricultural country occupying first place in the world in the volume of its industrial production. Its extensive industry, based upon modern technology, made it necessary for workers to have a higher degree of general education and vocational training. From the last third of the 19th century onwards, and especially since 1900, the number of public high schools and high school students has constantly increased. In the South a separate public school system for Black children only was established. This "separate but equal" system was legally sanctioned until the Supreme Court decision of 1954.

From a school which originally had the specific aim of preparing its graduates for further studies in colleges and universities the American high school was gradually changed into a mass institution with general aims. US schools differ from those of Western European countries where the school system still consists of three sections. As a rule, in Western Europe pupils are distributed to the various types of school mainly according to their social background. The different schools have different aims and different teaching programmes. Unlike Western European countries the USA established as its most common type the so-called comprehensive high school. The public elementary and high schools in the USA are free of charge and open to all children of a particular school district. In 1974 88.2% of all children of school age, i.e. 45.3 million, attended public schools. In 1976 their number amounted to 44.4 million. 2.3 million teachers worked in public elementary and high schools.¹

As public education is the responsibility of each separate state, the curriculum as well as the structure of the educational system differs from state to state. A special Department of Education, all-inclusive for the entire country, does

not exist in the USA. With the creation of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1953, the Office of Education, founded in 1867, became an integral part of this department.

The Structure of Public Schools

The US comprehensive high school ends with graduation from the 12th grade. The majority of high schools today cover the grades 7–12 (six years), following the 6-year elementary school. High school often consists of two stages: junior high school (grades 7–8–9) and senior high school (grades 10–11–12). But in addition to this organisation there are a number of other elementary and high school organisations.²

12	HIGH SCHOOL	SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL		HIGH SCHOOL			
11							
10		JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL					
9							
8		JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL					
7							
6		ELEMENTARY SCHOOL					
5							
4							
3							
2							
1							
GRADE	8-4 plan (mostly in rural areas) 24.3%	6-6 plan 20.8%	6-3-3 plan 23.3%	6-2-4 plan 15.3%	5-3-4 plan 3.4%	4-4-4 plan 2.0%	others 10.9%

In most states the kindergarten is part of the school system and located in the same school building. The pre-school institution is entered at the age of five, a year prior to elementary school.

All schools offer graduation from high school after the 12th grade, usually at the age of 17 or 18. The laws of most states require students to attend high school up to the age of 16. The number of students attending senior high school is increasing. In 1976 2.8 million boys and girls, i.e. about 75 % of all young people of this age group, graduated from public high school.³ The increase in the number of students in US senior high schools corresponds to a certain extent to the interests of the monopoly bourgeoisie. The monopoly bourgeoisie is anxious

to develop science and technology fully and to use them to strengthen its power. To achieve this aim it is forced to extend education. There are also other economic reasons why the ruling class is interested in the increase of high school education. Economists have calculated that keeping youth in high school is cheaper than paying them welfare benefit or unemployment benefit in case of unemployment. In the USA there has been chronic unemployment for the last 20 years, and unemployment among the 16–20 year-olds is 3–4 times higher than among the adult population.

The increasing number of high school graduates is often cited as proof of the democratic character of US schools, which claim to provide equal educational opportunities for all children. However, the myth about a genuinely democratic educational system in the USA, which supposedly guarantees equal opportunities on the ladder of education, does not correspond to the real situation.

In slum districts, the number of senior high school graduates is only 30–50% of all young people of this age group.⁴ The 25% of the total number of students who drop out of school before graduation come almost exclusively from the lower income groups. When the age required for job hunting is reached they leave school, because they are forced to earn money to help their families or because they are not content with their high school education. On the other hand, the lack of high school education is a handicap in getting a job. The unemployment rate is highest among persons with only seven to nine years of education.

US schools are a product of capitalist society in the USA, which is split up into antagonistic classes, and reflect all the contradictions which are characteristic of capitalism. The policy of the bourgeoisie in education was characterized by Frederick Engels as follows:

“Wenn die Bourgeoisie ihnen (den Arbeitern—*M. M.*) vom Leben soviel läßt, als eben nötig ist, so dürfen wir uns nicht wundern, wenn sie ihnen auch nur soviel Bildung gibt, als im Interesse der Bourgeoisie liegt.”⁵

The class character of US schools is revealed in a twofold manner:

1. The ruling class controls the curriculum. The US schools function as an instrument for the propagation of bourgeois-imperialist and anti-communist ideology. The aim is to integrate youth into capitalist society and to inculcate loyalties to US imperialism;

2. the US school guarantees the reproduction of the socio-economic and political conditions. The amount and type of education is regulated in such a way that for children of the exploited masses the road to a high-level, up-to-date education is blocked while the education granted to the middle and upper class serves the profit-interests of the ruling class.

Non-Public Schools: Private and Parochial Schools

Non-public schools are permitted under the law of the United States. In addition to public (state) schools a wide network of non-public schools exists in the USA.

A number of private, so-called independent schools exist for the most privileged sections of the capitalist class. High fees ensure the exclusive, aristocratic character of the independent schools. 60–70% of the budget of an independent school comes from the fees, the remainder from private donations of former graduates.⁶ Most of the independent schools cover the grades 7–12. About 4% of all high school students attend independent schools.⁷ The schools provide excellent conditions for studying. The standard of education is very high, the curricula are academic. In these schools future diplomats, bourgeois political leaders, managers etc. are educated. The graduates go to aristocratic “ivy league” universities and colleges such as Yale, Princeton and other élite institutions such as Stanford University on the West Coast. In 1976 5.4 million children, i.e. about 12% of all children of school age, attended non-public schools; 3.5 million of them attended Catholic elementary and secondary schools.⁸ Most of the non-public and many of the Catholic schools are located in the eight North Eastern States and in the cities near the Great Lakes. For example, in Chicago 33% of all pupils attend Catholic schools, in Boston 32% and in Cleveland 26%.⁹

The parochial school is financed by the parish and the pupils' tuition payments. The emphasis in parochial schools falls on religious education, although their curriculum must meet minimum state standards. In the last few years in connection with the crisis of late capitalist society the church has intensified its activities, especially in education, and has increased the network of its schools. The clergy is obstinately fighting against the principle of separation of church and state, demanding additional support from the federal budget for parochial schools. This contradicts the US Constitution and the constitutions of almost all states, which forbid religious education in public schools and the use of public finance for religious institutions, including parochial schools. However, through their influence and by means of threats, intrigues and bribery, the clergy has caused a number of bills increasing state financial support for public schools to fail. The clergy has demanded the extension of such bills to parochial schools. The National Defense Act of 1958, for example, provided subsidies for laboratory equipment for both public and parochial schools. A number of states provide support for bus transport for pupils at parochial schools. Following the Supreme Court desegregation decision of 1954, Southern states have passed laws providing public money for private schools in the event of desegregation of schools.

Social Polarization in Public Schools

Schools are supported mainly by taxes levied on the state's population. About half of the school budget comes from the local property taxes, a further 42% coming from the state government. This means that more than 90% of the school budget comes from the state government including the local tax yield from the population. Support of the schools by the federal government is extremely meagre and amounts to no more than about 9% (1975) of the school budget.¹⁰ This piecemeal financing leads to an extreme inequality in the material conditions of the schools and consequently in the educational opportunities of their pupils. This is especially marked in the contrast between the economically highly developed and the less industrialized or backward areas of the USA. For example, the states in the North East and in the West spend about twice as much money for schools as the less industrialized Southern and Central states. The lowest expenditures for education are registered in Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina and other Southern States. For example, in 1977 the annual expenditure for one pupil amounted in the state of New York to \$ 2,333, in California to \$ 1,595, while in Mississippi it was only \$ 1,072.¹¹ The schools for Black children in Southern states are poorly financed and miserably equipped, and the number of illiterates is especially high.

An imbalance in the expenditure on schools can be noted not only between the various states, but also within the borders of a state or a city. The social polarization in schools for the poor and schools for the rich corresponds here with the separation within the cities. The wealthy live in well-built and well-secured communities, while the poor live in deprived ghettos. In the 1950s and 1960s a large number of wealthy inhabitants (upper class and middle class) moved from the cities to the suburbs. The suburbs have a separate municipal system. Because of the high property values of the suburbs the budget of suburban schools is about 5 times higher than the budget of schools in the inner city and in rural areas. For example, in 1965 the cost per pupil ranged in the various school districts in California from \$257 to \$1,262.¹² The suburbs developed a special type of school: the Suburban School. It has modern architecture, giving ample space, excellent technical equipment, highly qualified teachers, good academic programmes and a high rate of graduates admitted to colleges and universities. The class size is only half as high as in the schools of the city. For the less wealthy districts the method of financing schools blocks any opportunity for overcoming their chronic financial crisis and improving the standard of education. In the post-war period the cities' population changed when impoverished farmers and unskilled workers—the majority of them Black, Puerto Rican, and Chicano—moved in. More and more the inner cities are becoming the rallying point of the poorest and most exploited sections of US society. In New York City and other large cities the school situation is most difficult. The financing of urban schools, especially in slum districts, is inadequate. The schools are poorly equipped, the school buildings are old.

In 1954 the US Supreme Court in the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling held that separate schools for white and Black children are inherently unequal and ordered desegregation "with all deliberate speed". This Supreme Court decision came as a result of the decade-long struggle of the Civil Rights Movement against the "separate but equal" racist view established at the end of the 19th century. It was a great victory of the Civil Rights Movement in its struggle for equal rights. However, prolonged court actions and local and state resistance prevented a smooth and prompt transition in areas where deep-rooted racist traditions were upset by the Supreme Court ruling. In other areas where legal steps toward school integration had been taken the problem of school segregation persisted because of segregated housing patterns. In 1974 about 65% of Blacks attended schools with 50–100% of the students Black, 35% of Blacks attended schools with 95–100% Black.¹³

The demand of Black Americans and other minorities for the abolition of school segregation has become more and more insistent. "Busing" has become a symbolic issue in the struggle against segregation. Busing is the state financed bus transport to schools to improve the "racial balance"; the goal is to avoid schools in which children of minority groups predominate. The number of pupils being bused is very low so that so far no real change in the situation has been achieved. Furthermore, Black children who are bused from Black slum districts to white suburban schools are sometimes not mixed with white pupils, but educated in segregated classes. As a result, the feeling of racial isolation can even be intensified. The inhabitants of slum districts are sometimes against busing and refuse it as a humiliating handout from rich America. Busing is not a real solution to the problem of segregation in schools, since segregation in housing and the severe economic and social differences between wealthy white citizens and lower-income minority groups remain unchanged. In New York, Philadelphia and other cities attempts have been made to force the Board of Education to reorganize school districts so that schools are attended by children of different social background and racial groups. These attempts aiming at desegregation of schools have been attacked by the Ku-Klux-Klan, White Citizens Councils and other racist organisations as well as by quite a few well-to-do white citizens.

After the Sputnik shock of 1957 the ruling class in the USA made efforts to improve the quality of education in order to be able to compete with the successful development of Soviet science and technology. An additional impetus to increased federal aid to ghetto education was created by the impact of the Civil Rights Movement in the mid '60s. From 1958 to 1968 the US Congress passed a number of acts which provide the schools with extra means in addition to state and local expenditure. In 1965 and 1966 Congress passed acts concerning financial help for school districts with a predominantly poor population. The act passed in 1965 provided, among other things, money for equipment, for more teachers to decrease the class size and for pre-school education. The project "Head Start", for instance, aimed at the gathering of pre-school children (3–5 years) from lower-income families in the cities in groups in order to improve

their physical and intellectual development. Under the condition of the crisis of the 1970's these programmes have been curtailed. The expenditure on education is far from enough. Only about 2 % of the federal budget is devoted to education.

The I.Q. Tests and Their Social Consequences

At the beginning of the 20th century the American philosopher and pedagogue John Dewey (1859–1952) developed a theory which has strongly influenced American schools right up to the present time. One of its main theses says that each individual has certain "original" characteristics not only in anatomical and physiological peculiarities, but also in mental faculties. It was assumed that the vast majority of people do not have high intellectual faculties, but an aptitude for the practical. This theory of Dewey is typical of bourgeois psychologists and pedagogues who proclaim the primacy of heredity. Mental faculties are assumed to be largely predetermined and unchangeable. Dewey's categorical division of children into two groups—pupils capable of intellectual work and those capable only of practical work—prepared the way for the wide usage of intelligence tests in US schools.

The I.Q. theory overestimates the importance of hereditary factors for the development of mental capacities and ignores the possible development of the human personality, including the intellectual faculties, in the process of a child's activity under the influence of environmental stimulation both at home and at school. This tendency contradicts the result of scientific work in psychology and genetics as well as the experience of mankind. A series of questions and answers can hardly serve as a more or less exact instrument for measuring such a complicated phenomenon as the mental faculties of a human personality and above all its possible further development.

The result of an intelligence test is called the intelligence quotient. The measured grade of intelligence is expressed as the so-called intelligence age and is divided by the actual age of the tested person (formula: $\frac{\text{mental age}}{\text{actual age}} \times 100$). According to their I.Q. pupils are classified into groups:

about	50 % of the children have average I.Q.	(I.Q. 90–109)
	16 % are low normal	(I.Q. 80–89)
	16 % are high normal	(I.Q. 110–119)
	9 % are very gifted	(I.Q. 120–150)
	9 % are mentally retarded	(I.Q. 70–40). ¹⁴

Since the 1920s measurement of the mental faculties of children of school age has characterized US schools. I.Q. tests consist of a series of tasks and problems which the child has to solve in a fixed period of time. I.Q. tests are carried out even in the first days at school. For instance, the children are asked to name the things illustrated in pictures, e.g. violin, piano, yacht, camera, type-writer.

Children from poor families may not know these words and objects. The majority of the tasks correspond with the vocabulary, the experience and the interests of white middle-class children.¹⁵

Many investigations demonstrate that the I.Q. is closely connected with the social background of the children. In rich school districts 53% of the children have an I.Q. over 110 (gifted), whereas in slum school districts only 6% of the children have an I.Q. over 110.¹⁶ In reality, these tests measure not ability or potential, but the degree of assimilation into the dominant culture and value system.

Although in the last few years under the influence of community protest, especially by Black Americans in the 1960's, the I.Q. tests have been used less and less and have been banned in some of the cities, the conception of the largely unchangeable innate mental faculties of the human being, with all its practical consequences, and the thesis of the unfitness of a large number of pupils to do intellectual work remain an essential characteristic of US schools. In some cases the discredited I.Q. tests have been replaced by new tests, especially by standardized tests. Standardized tests, e.g. reading tests, are meant to evaluate school learning whereas group intelligence tests are designed to test general information and reasoning. In a number of US schools tests to assign children to slow, average and fast tracks are still in use.

The I.Q. theory with its pseudo-scientific foundation permits the maintenance of the anti-democratic character of US schools. In the 1970's the I.Q. theory has been revived in a new form. Racist theories of Black mental or personality inferiority have proliferated in guises such as "learning disability". The alleged inferiority of intellect and/or personality is claimed to be either inherited or caused by environment. While Arthur Jensen put forth the theory of Black genetic intellectual inferiority, Christopher Jencks claims that both by birth and by living conditions Black people cannot benefit from education because of their deficient intelligence and defective personalities. Albert Shanker claims that due to ghetto life large numbers of Black children have "incurable behavior" and should be segregated into special classes, and that equally large numbers of Black children are guilty of "criminal behavior" and should be ousted from the regular schools. The goal of these theories is to stem the rising tide of the Black liberation struggle and the process of integration of schools and to stigmatize as mentally and educationally inferior thousands of children of working-class families, especially if they are poor and/or Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano or Native American, on the false basis of "learning disability".

Differentiation of Education in US Schools

The differentiation of education in many US schools begins in the very early grades. The pupils are classified into supposedly homogeneous ability groups within a class or—in big schools—into homogeneous classes ("tracking"). In

many schools where group I.Q.s are no longer given, it is by reading scores that pupils are ranked. Instead of having definite grade standards of achievement for all children the I.Q. theory argues that children should be expected to work "up to the level of their ability" which, of course, is demonstrated by test scores.

In the USA there is in fact no uniform curriculum and no fixed minimum of knowledge and skills which all pupils have to acquire, although a standardization of curricula has been achieved to a certain extent by the requirements of the colleges and universities as well as by recommendations concerning curricula and schedules by the Office of Education at federal and state level. The teacher adapts the curricula recommended for elementary school to the level of the group he works with. In a group of children with a high I.Q. the lessons are solid and substantial. However, lower demands are made on children who are classified as "ungifted". Theoretical education is neglected in favour of practical work. The large majority of US schools do not compensate for the lack of education in the pre-school period. By lowering demands ghetto schools stunt the intellectual development of children from lower social groups. The schools fail to enrich their experience and to train their intellects. As a result of the low demands the knowledge of "ungifted" pupils remains far behind the knowledge of their "gifted" fellow pupils.

The absence of definite grade standards of achievement and the practice of individual or group standards based on the child's "ability" as well as the practice of one hundred per cent promotion—only lately and meaninglessly modified—have been an important cause of the alarming amount of reading and language retardation in US schools today.

A typical junior high school curriculum includes the following subjects (example only):¹⁷

Subjects	Number of Periods per Week (one week — 5 days)
English (literature, grammar, essay)	5
social studies (history of the USA, history and geography of the states of the world, current events)	5
general science	5
mathematics	5
industrial arts and/or home-making	5
physical education and hygiene	3-4
(arts and music)	2-3)

The differentiation of education is intensified in junior high school (grades 7-9). In the 8th grade the first options appear, e.g. foreign languages, type-writing, music, arts. The 9th grade has a transitional character. A number of students want to drop out of school when they have reached the age necessary for getting a job. Other students intend to go to senior high school up to graduation—the 12th grade. On the basis of tests the school guidance counsellor, or student adviser advises the individual student as to which educational path he should take.

The senior high school (grades 10-12) has a varied curriculum. As a rule, the senior high school offers general, college preparation and vocational courses. In the latter pre-vocational and vocational education is offered, e.g. agricultural education, business education (typewriting, shorthand, book-keeping), home economics, trade and industrial education. In a number of schools vocational training is carried out in co-ordination with industrial firms and takes place in tool departments, in auto-mechanic workshops, on building sites etc. Mostly vocational education is carried out in the workshops and classrooms of the school. In 1969 31.4% of senior high school students attended vocational courses.¹⁸

The few compulsory subjects in senior high schools are the following (as an example)¹⁹:

Subjects	Class	Periods per Week
English (literature, essay, journalism, drama)	10-12	5
social studies (history of the USA, civics)	10-12	5
mathematics	10	5
biology	10	5
physical education	10-12	2-3

In the overwhelming majority of senior high schools (96,5%) students are divided into ability groups in the compulsory subjects.²⁰

Physics, chemistry, algebra and foreign languages are taken only by a minority of students (20-25%).²¹ Up to 150 options of different course duration are offered in big schools. However, small schools with less than 500 pupils and schools in poor areas often find it difficult to offer the options necessary for the academic curriculum.

As a rule, in high school there are no comprehensive final examinations. Mostly the courses attended and the results achieved are registered on student records and graded on a points system.

The different courses of study in senior high school generally correspond to the grouping of the pupils in elementary school. At the same time, this grouping generally corresponds to the social background of the children. Investigations

have shown that only 15% of the children from lower-income groups take the college-preparation courses in senior high school, whereas 79% of children from high-income families take the academic courses.²² The US school system is characterized by faults deriving from its class character: inequality in the material opportunities for getting an education, privileged private schools, segregated schools and the pseudo-scientific conception of fixed inborn mental faculties of the pupils as a theoretical justification for unequal education.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Statistical Abstracts of the United States 1977, Washington, D.C. 1977, pp. 132, 142, 143.
- 2) *Conant, J.*, The Comprehensive High School, New York 1967, p. 85.
- 3) Statistical Abstracts of the United States 1977, p. 149.
- 4) *Malkova, S. A.*, "Bildungsmöglichkeiten und Bildungsbarrieren in den USA" in: *Vergleichende Pädagogik*, Berlin, 6/1971, p. 29.
- 5) *Marx, K./F. Engels*, Werke, Vol. 2, Berlin 1957, p. 338.
- 6) *Mal'kova, Z. A.*, *Sovremennaja škola SŠA*, Moskva 1971, p. 112.
- 7) *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- 8) Statistical Abstracts of the United States 1977, pp. 132, 145.
- 9) *Mal'kova, Z. A.*, op. cit., p. 107.
- 10) Statistical Abstracts of the United States 1977, p. 161.
- 11) *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- 12) *Mal'kova, Z. A.*, op. cit., p. 85.
- 13) Statistical Abstracts of the United States 1977, p. 176.
- 14) *Pressey, S./F. Robinson/G. Horrocks*, *Psychology in Education*, New York 1959, pp. 61–62.
- 15) *Sexton, P.*, *Education and Income*, New York 1964, pp. 43–44.
- 16) *Willers, G.*, *Das Bildungswesen der USA*, München 1965, p. 56.
- 17) *Mal'kova, Z. A.*, op. cit., pp. 182, 184.
- 18) Cf. *Purgand, W.*, "Zur Berufsausbildung in den USA" in: *Vergleichende Pädagogik*, Berlin, 3/1974.
- 19) *Malkova, S. A.*, op. cit., p. 44.
- 20) *Conant, J.*, op. cit., p. 30.
- 21) *Malkova, S. A.*, op. cit., p. 44.
- 22) *Sexton, P.*, op. cit., p. 177.

Further Reading

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Higher Education in the USA

The Development of Higher Education

The development of higher education in the USA is usually divided into four broad stages:

- 1636—1776, Foundation of the first “colonial” colleges;
- 1776—1862, Foundation and development of various types of establishments;
- 1862—1900, Development of universities;
- and from 1900, the extension of higher education.¹

The first stage of development began with the foundation of Harvard College (1636) and included institutions for the training of the clergy equivalent to those in England. Almost all were founded and supported by religious bodies. Even today numerous institutions of higher education are still supported and controlled by religious bodies.

The foundation of the first truly American educational establishments of various types did not occur until the second stage in connection with developments in the War of Independence, and especially in the middle of the 19th century when the economic opening-up of the country created the need for greater numbers of more highly qualified specialists. Most striking of all was the development of technical and agricultural schools. The institutions which were already established introduced equivalent courses into their curricula. At this stage an obvious division between publicly and privately controlled institutions became visible. The first three state institutions were already established before 1800 (University of Georgia 1785, North Carolina 1789, Vermont 1791). The first institutions to be controlled by the local authorities, the first separate colleges for women and the first co-educational colleges for men and women all evolved during this second stage.

The Land-Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 by which the various States of the Federation were allotted money and land for the foundation and support of institutions of higher education played a significant part in the development of the state institutions, especially of the larger universities. The so-called “Land-Grant Colleges/Universities” had to meet the rising demand for engineers, specialists in agriculture etc. in connection with the development of the country. During this stage some of the oldest institutions became universities (Harvard College, Yale College, Columbia College etc.). Besides the establishment of universities with the help of money from the state numerous private universities

were founded and financed by private enterprise (e.g. Stanford University, University of Chicago).

The fourth stage of development is characterized by a significant increase in the number of institutions and students. At this time the first Junior Colleges/Community Colleges were founded, with courses which either led to a technical trade or ran parallel to an academic education and after which it was possible for good students to go onto a 4-year institution, beginning in the second or third year of academic study, assuming that an appropriate standard had been reached.

The Present Structure of American Higher Education

The names of the American institutions of higher education give little indication of their real character. Every institution that accepts students who have completed the senior stage in school education can call itself a University, College, Institute or indeed simply School. This is the case whether an academic education is given, or technical training in a particular trade or profession, whether it is a matter of a specialised institution of higher education or a form of vocational training for middle-grade employees. Thus, the institutions of higher education in the United States, more than 2,700 in number, cannot be compared to the universities and other academic institutions of many other countries, and this is also the criterion by which one must assess the significance of the 50% of young people gaining access to some form of higher education.²

In the mid-seventies, a third of all institutions were 2-year-institutions (Junior Colleges/Community Colleges); 56% of all institutions were designated as being under private control. Of these again some two thirds are in the hand of religious bodies. In 1976, however, private institutions matriculated only 2.3 of the 9.7 million students, i.e. 24%. Many of them offer a pronounced élitist educational training which is reserved for the children of the propertied class because of the high fees and other costs (between 4,000 and 5,000 dollars per year). Generally speaking, the fees for students at state universities and colleges amount to between \$ 500 and \$ 1,000 a year; at private colleges and universities a student can pay between \$ 2,000 and \$ 4,000 and the price is rising continuously. The élitist character of the private top-institutions is shown for example in the fact that an applicant whose father studied at the institution may be automatically granted a certain number of credit points for the entrance examination. The National Center for Education Statistics assumes that by 1985 about 20% of students will be studying at privately controlled institutions of higher education.

The structures of these institutions may be divided into three main types:

- College, School or Institute training for one of the main professions or in a principal field of academic education (Teacher Training Colleges, School of Engineering etc.);

- A University in the European sense, a College or Institute with a number of academic or professional courses and disciplines alongside one another; most of these being grouped in composite organisational units—Colleges or Schools for the main disciplines concerned (Harvard, Princeton etc.);
- Large and complex academic institutions, comprising several such entities and in some cases 100,000 students or more. One executive body unites several geographically separated campuses—university colonies or towns, in practice relatively independent institutions of higher learning (State University of New York, University of California etc.).

As far as the educational objectives of the American institutions of higher education are concerned, two types can be distinguished: institutions that grant academic degrees, and those that do not (2-year-institutions). The institutions that grant academic degrees offer courses lasting at least four years.

In American higher education there are academic degrees at three levels:

1. Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science or comparable professional degrees—B. A., B. S. in the appropriate field, which is always indicated;
2. Master of Arts, Master of Science or comparable professional degrees—M. A., M. S. in the appropriate field;
3. Doctor of Philosophy (including the natural sciences)— Ph. D. in the appropriate field.

Normally four years of study are required for the first academic degree, a further one or two years for the second degree and a further three to four years for the doctorate (here the variations are considerable, of course). The period of four years for the first academic degree is exceeded in a number of important disciplines. What this often means is that, before the actual professional training begins, two or more years must be spent studying at a Liberal Arts College, at which a general education is given and the foundations of the subject to be studied are taught in part still at high school level. The period of study leading to the first academic degree can thus be extended to as much as six or seven years. Indeed in some institutions, in certain disciplines (medicine), a B.A. or a B.S. in another discipline is demanded before the course can be started. The qualitative differences between the various institutions of higher education are extraordinary; the difference in standard extends from "diploma mills" right up to the highest level in the leading institutions. This is why, in university catalogues listing teaching staff etc., not only the degree held is indicated but also the institution where it was obtained. Out of this emerges a certain qualitative evaluation. National and regional Associations for Accreditation evaluate periodically the standard of teaching and research of the institutions of higher education.

As in other capitalist countries, the attempt is now being made, by means of structural developments, to improve the efficiency of training in the interest

of the capital. The most important aspect of this structural development consists in placing the great majority of students on short courses, with only a small, socially determined percentage of young people going to élite institutions to be prepared for selected privileged professions and for leading managerial positions. Undergraduate studies are for the most part largely divorced from research. Participation in research, or independent study with a research character, is restricted to the élite institutions. Students protesting against the impersonal methods of instruction ask: What are we studying for? Are we to be utility objects, replaceable cogs in the production process, to be thrown away when no longer needed? Students at Berkeley asked on a banner: Please do not fold, do not bend—I am a human being.³ The student protest movement reflected in a certain manner the fact that the structure and profile of higher education are geared to the needs of the capitalist reproduction process. Shaping and development of personality are attuned to these requirements to a large extent, even though it is precisely the student movement that has shown that a certain part—admittedly a small proportion—of the student body is not willing to fit into the scheme of things.

The Management of Higher Education, of Universities and Colleges

Economic considerations—above all criteria of efficiency—and social objectives are the subject of controversies which have arisen with regard to the management of institutions of higher education, and the whole field of education. There has been no direct central administration of American institutions of education at federal level. There is admittedly a United States Office of Education (U.S.O.E.) as a part of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, but this Office of Education has no administrative authority vis-a-vis the individual institutions. Its principal activity lies in influencing financial allocation, arranging conferences, presenting recommendations, developing international relations, issuing statistics and so on.

It has been particularly in the period since the fifties that attempts have been made to overcome the lack of central administration and direction. For this purpose various central institutions and councils at national level have been created and developed, primarily with advisory functions and for the provision of information but also having the objective of “lobbying”, of stimulating or guiding development by means of specific allocation of resources. However, higher education has hitherto had no all-embracing centrally directed and coordinated development.

The most influential people involved in the politics of higher education are becoming aware of the limitations which are imposed by the use of the market mechanism as regulator for the development of higher education, as a spontaneous result of the correlation between demand and supply on the “job market”. Elements of a “national policy” and a stronger centralisation of the planning

and direction of higher education are demanded and promoted. A process of this nature is in fact taking place.

For the internal administration—no matter whether private or in the public sector—the Board of Trustees or Board of Regents of the institution in question is the decisive authority. Its membership consists normally not of academics but of professional administrators, businessmen, representatives of the local and state administration, of religious bodies and of the big companies. The Board of Trustees appoints the President of the institution and the various administrative officers. The President is responsible and accountable to the Board. By virtue of the nature of the contract of employment he can be removed at short notice. The senior council of the teaching staff, the Senate, has no possibility of making decisions on fundamental questions. It can make recommendations to the Board, but their implementation depends on the Board. The students too lack any opportunity of participating in the management of the institution when basic questions are involved.

A special study has been made of an investigation into five of the leading institutions of higher education in California which could be shown to have the greatest number of students, the most expensive research programs and the greatest support from public sources and from private enterprise (University of California, California State Colleges, California Institute of Technology—"Caltech"—, University of Southern California, Stanford University).⁴ The managerial boards of these institutions consist of altogether 130 trustees and regents who determine policy in matters of education and research. They include only six women, the average age of the trustees being sixty. There is only one black trustee who is also the only labour representative. 78 trustees or regents sit on the board of directors of leading corporations and banks. The 130 persons represent 35 concerns in the fields of electronics, the space and military industries, 12 oil companies, 20 banks, 15 insurance companies, 7 air corporations etc. By means of the managerial structure of the institutions of higher education a close contact between corporations, especially the military-industrial complex, and the institutes of higher education is achieved. Such a connexion influencing teaching and research can be found in all the relevant academic institutions, especially in the prestige institutions, of course. In particular, there is hardly a top institution which has not made contracts with the Department of Defense.

The Present Social and Political Conditions of Students and Academics

For a certain period, in connection with the much-cited "Sputnik-shock", United States imperialism has tried to draw level with the Soviet Union in the field of education. In the attempt to make up lost ground in the class struggle with socialism, and convinced that it had the domestic situation under control, U.S. imperialism went relatively far and opened the "education floodgates" more than in the past and further than most of the other capitalist countries. Privilege

in the education of the ruling class was not reduced, but it was modified according to the socio-economic conditions. In so doing, the leading politicians and theorists assumed that no social conflicts would arise, but on the contrary existing conflicts would be checked. Education would operate as an immediate growth factor for the economy and at the same time would serve to integrate ever larger sections of the population firmly in the state monopoly system.

In this attempt new colleges were formed, the means available for grants for students were increased, the number of students rose yearly. But many students were even at that time forced to interrupt their studies for some time or to take a part-time job for financial reasons. Half of the freshmen did not complete their studies.

In typical capitalist fashion, education was treated and is being treated as a product, and accordingly it had been produced—not of course without some attempt at guidance and planning—simply on the assumption that in the United States there could never be enough qualified persons. The danger of unemployment seemed to be a danger that could threaten only the poor, the old, and people from minority groups, who could not afford education. Since about 1970 this thinking has shown itself to be false. The phenomenon of “academic overproduction”, of unemployment or underemployment of hundreds of thousands of highly qualified people is one more aspect, additional to those for a long time evident, of how the general crisis of capitalism has been intensified in the United States since the beginning of the seventies.

At that time a development began in which the imperialist policy on higher education could react on the situation created by the expansion in the sixties and the new economic situation. Reduction of financial support and the creation and growth of unemployment among academics, even threatening graduates, present the institutions of higher education in the USA with problems which have been almost unknown up till now.

From 1970 to 1976, 113 campuses closed their doors. Many institutions are announcing that they can hardly see a way out of their financial difficulties and may perhaps go bankrupt. This applies as well to state-run as to private institutions, which are dependent on the number of matriculations, either indirectly (from state subsidies) and/or directly (from fees).

In 1975, the current-fund revenue of institutions of higher education from the federal government or from state governments amounted to about 17 billion dollars for the whole USA, which is equivalent to about 20% of the military budget of this year. The federal government allocated for education at all levels 4%, but for military purposes nearly a third of the whole budget. By 1980, U.S. higher education—according to estimates—will have to reckon with a discrepancy of 51 billion dollars between outlay and income. Especially endangered are the smaller, younger, lesser-known institutions, which are 60–80% dependent on fees and those which are totally or to a greater extent attended by Afro-American students. The temporary reduction of the number of students has led to a narrower social selection. The number of grants for students has

been cut. In 1967 the federal government allotted 11,324 grants to students beginning post-graduate courses. Six years later there were only 2,137, a cut of more than 80%. In the mid-seventies, only about a third of all students received financial aid in any form from the state or from an institution; in more and more cases this support is given as a loan which must be paid back after graduation.

From 1969 to 1977 the percentage of freshmen coming from families with an income at or below the national average declined from 30% to 20%; at the same time the percentage from families with an income of roughly double the national average or more rose from 14 to 42%.

The "Daily World" summed up this development as follows: "Federal and state aid to working-class students has been slashed. Racist theories are being used to justify elimination of social services in minority communities..."⁵

In accordance with the change in opportunities to study, the political attitudes of the students of the mid-seventies were moving further towards the conservative or "non-political" approach. The political movement of progressive students from the second half of the sixties until the beginning of the seventies, which had received great publicity, did not, in fact, bring about the change in society or a basic democratisation of universities and colleges that many of their leaders had hoped for, but did, however, make a contribution to the victory of the Vietnamese people over U.S. imperialism and extended the possibilities of political activities on the campus.

Of course, it was only a small proportion (between 5 and 15%) of all students who were politically active at the time of the great demonstrations. The mass of students was and is willing to serve the ruling class and to contribute to the preservation of the existing system. Because of the material conditions students from the working class and from minorities are at a disadvantage, being more easily refused a place of study at an academic institution, and political opposition and activity are becoming more and more a risk and are suppressed with increasing vigour. A sociological inquiry has shown that nearly three quarters of the 1977-78 freshmen call themselves conservative or "middle of the road" and only 2% would call themselves "far left" (without further defining the character of this "leftist" attitude here).

The situation among teaching staff is also changing. Not only are the salaries of the teaching staff being devalued (at a rate of inflation of about 10% per year), but greater numbers of scientists are also being dismissed. For instance in August 1976 the City University of New York announced the dismissal of 1,000 members of the teaching staff, who hardly had any chance of getting equivalent employment or even any employment. In the mid-seventies not more than about 55% of the faculty had tenure, a guarantee (but only a relative one) against being fired at a moment's notice.

Higher Education in the United States presents itself as a huge educational enterprise with important resources, serving the needs of the capitalist reproduction process, and consequently characterized by sharp contradictions.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) *Furniss, W. T. (ed.), American Universities and Colleges, Eleventh Edition, Washington, D. C. 1973.*
- 2) Main sources for figures in this article:
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"The Characteristics and Attitudes of 1977-78 Freshmen" in: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Washington D. C., January 23, 1978.
- 3) *Miller, M. V./S. Gilmore, Revolution at Berkeley, New York 1965, p. 235.*
- 4) *Aptheker, B., The Academic Rebellion in the United States, Secaucus, New Jersey 1972, p. 33 ff.*
- 5) *Jones, S., "Minorities squeezed off Campus" in: Daily World, New York, December 15, 1973.*

Further Reading

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Youth and Youth Organisations in the USA

Youth under Capitalist Crisis

Youth is a complex section of society. Young people belong to different classes, grow up in different social, political, national, and racial backgrounds. According to the class and stratum of society to which they belong young people are affected more or less seriously, and in different ways, by the crisis of capitalism. Therefore their aims and their manner of protest against the present disastrous situation are varied.

One problem which is caused by the capitalist crisis and especially faces young people, is unemployment. Unemployment among youth is greater than among the other sections of the population because young people are often not properly trained and not adequately protected in trade unions. Since 1972 about 20 per cent of all young people have been without work and among non-white youth the unemployment rate has been about 40 per cent and even higher in some areas. These figures only include officially registered unemployed persons and exclude all first-job seekers. This high unemployment rate is one reason for the fact that young people often accept the hardest and worst-paid jobs.

Discrimination is another problem not only for non-white youths but also for young women in the USA. They especially face job discrimination. Most women do not get equal pay for equal work. On the average, women receive for the same work 24 per cent less money than men and non-white women even about 49 per cent less.¹ Young non-white women are paid worst. The unemployment rate of women is two per cent higher than the average. Only ten per cent of the working women were organized in trade unions in 1974.² Many young women are prevented from working because there are not enough day-care centres.

Funds for education are being cut in the USA as an alleged means of reducing inflation. At the same time the cost of graduate courses is rising. In 1972 six million children studied at overcrowded schools and in classes with one teacher for all subjects.³ In 1973 about one million children, mainly from black and low-income families, between the ages of 12 and 17 could not read.⁴

According to official US-statistics of 1974 8.6 per cent of white and more than 35 per cent of Afro-American youth between 14 and 24 years of age were living in poverty.⁵

Young people lack essential political rights. Not until 1971 was the voting age, for instance, reduced to 18. Nevertheless, young Americans are still not eligible for election to the House of Representatives till the age of 25 and must be 30 for the Senate.

Since the thirties youth has gained importance as a section of society in the USA. In the thirties young people suffered especially from the world economic crisis through unemployment, and became one of the major forces in the democratic mass movements. They fought for their economic and political rights. The government could not ignore their problems any longer.

In 1975 20.9 per cent of the US-population consisted of people between 14 and 24 years of age⁶, and this age category shows a tendency toward further increase. The growing importance of this section is expressed not only by its number but also by its involvement in economic life (about 50 per cent of the workers in basic industries are young people) and by its struggle for participation in political life.

The ruling class recognizes this importance and tries by means of the educational system, the mass media, and various youth organisations to manipulate young people of all classes and strata in accordance with its interests.

Bourgeois Youth Organisations

The ruling class considers bourgeois youth organisations as important instruments for maintaining its control and influencing young people, and for distracting them from struggle. Such organisations are subsidized by the machineries of the two major parties, by federal bodies, by churches, and by big corporations. Because of this support bourgeois youth organisations can sometimes help their members to find jobs. The ruling class uses this attractive method in order to win young workers and all other classes and strata of youth.

To propagate their ideas among youth, most of the bourgeois political organisations have established their own youth branches, such as for instance the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. The youth organisation of the Democratic Party was founded in 1932, and its membership amounted to nearly one million in 1972. The Young Republicans have existed since 1931, and their membership numbered 350,000 in 1972.⁷

With the slogan "Americanism and Patriotism" the ruling circles wish to transform US youth into willing supporters of capitalism. They want to cultivate feelings of extreme nationalism and of anti-communism in the younger generation to secure the capitalist system. To name only some organisations which serve this end (figures from 1972)⁸:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| – Boys' Clubs of America | 600,000 members (from 10 to 20 years) |
| – Boy Scouts of America | 5,000,000 members (from 12 to 16 years) |
| – Girls' Clubs of America | 50,000 members (from 7 to 18 years) |
| – Girl Scouts of America | 3,500,000 members (from 10 to 18 years) |

One objective of the Peace Corps, founded in 1961, was also the implanting of "Americanism and Patriotism" in young people's minds. Young Americans

gave two years service to help the developing countries, teaching in schools there, working in agriculture, and building roads, schools and hospitals. In the middle of the sixties members of the Peace Corps were active in 50 countries.⁹ The ideals of young Americans were misused by the government to produce a sense of patriotism in these young people who thought the USA was generously helping other countries. The real aim of the Peace Corps, however, consisted in neo-colonialist economic and political expansion and in assisting the subversive activities of the CIA. When the real aims of the Peace Corps became known to the public it was expelled from many countries and many sincere members left the organisation.

Religious youth organisations also contribute to the pro-capitalist education of the younger generation. This work is primarily carried out by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) with a membership of 5,800,000 and by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) with 2,000,000 members (1972).¹⁰ These organisations, founded in 1851, have again won influence in recent years because they actively participated in the democratic movements of the sixties, in the anti-war and civil rights struggles. As a matter of fact, however, the members of the religious organisations tried to moderate the goals of these movements and to prevent the development of progressive revolutionary ideas.

A youth organisation which openly declares that its aim consists of preserving the interests and integrity of the government is the United States National Student Association (NSA) founded in 1947. The NSA represented most of the students and had the greatest influence on campuses. It is not only controlled and supported by Big Business and government agencies but has also had close ties with the CIA. Many NSA leaders were deeply involved in international espionage. The connections with the CIA, established since 1950, were revealed in 1967 by the American press. This resulted in a loss of membership. Under the pressure of the rank and file, and as a result of the student rebellion in the sixties, the NSA changed its policy to some extent. It began to support the anti-war and civil rights movements. This process was of course carried out within the framework of bourgeois liberalism.

However intensively the ruling class has tried it cannot persuade all young people of the superiority of the American capitalist system because many young people of different classes and strata, and especially working-class youth, suffer from the crisis of capitalism which has reached a new climax since the sixties. This crisis has found its expression in the Vietnam war, in unemployment, poverty, inflation, militarization of education, and moral disintegration.

In the sixties the time of the "silent generation" of the cold war and of the McCarthy era was over. It began to protest against a society which could not guarantee young people a secure future and the all-round development of personality.

Pseudo-Protest

The pseudo-protest currents are connected by some common aspects: Young people, mainly of petty-bourgeois origin, feel betrayed by a society which does not respond to their problems. They are disillusioned by the failure of active political protest or discouraged by the climate of official violence. Therefore they try to find a way out by escaping from reality. They are attracted by exotic religions, by foreign cultures, by Negro jazz and Indian music. They flee into alcoholic drinks, sex, and drugs to forget their surroundings. These young people do not want to take part in the political life of the country. They are against American society, the "establishment", but do not undertake anything to alter it. Therefore they are in a way integrated into the society they reject.

These non-political, partly spontaneous forms of protest have often been used and manipulated by the ruling capitalist class in order to destroy any active protest directed against the capitalist system. Mass media and mass culture have always propagated a type of individualist and non-political youth.

Drugs as a feature of these sub- or youth cultures have turned into a serious problem for society. In 1972 five million people smoked marihuana¹¹ and up to 559,000 heroin addicts were officially registered in the USA in 1975¹², most of them under the age of 25. The official statistics reveal only the tip of the iceberg. The cost of additional hospitals and of special police forces pursuing drug offenders increases every year.

The Jesus People movement, which rejects drugs, has won influence among youth so quickly because it is supported by the ruling class as one means of solving the drug problem. The mass media are creating a new culture around this direction of escape.

Another problem, which is closely connected with drug addiction, is the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency. This high crime-rate is also caused by the brutality propagated by all mass media and implanted in the people's minds by aggressive governmental policy, to which young Americans are subjected from childhood onward. The US rate of juvenile delinquency is the highest in the world.

This pseudo-protest as a whole is only one response of young people to the capitalist crisis and of course offers no way out of the disastrous situation, because even if this protest were not manipulated by the establishment it could not change anything.

Social Protest Movements

In the sixties broad social protest movements in which young people played the decisive role emerged in the USA as well as in other capitalist countries. They were directed against some of the more important weaknesses of the

capitalist system, hoping to abolish them and to improve the situation of young people and all oppressed classes and strata. Never before had the social protest of youth assumed such a mass scale and had so critically questioned the values of capitalist society.

Many students demanded more democratic freedom for political activities on campuses. They also demanded a review of the educational system together with their right to participate in the selection of teaching staff and in determining the curriculum. They struggled for the abolition of the close ties between universities and the military-industrial complex, as well as the abolition of ROTC-branches (Reserve Officers Training Corps) on campuses.

In addition to individual protests and protests directed at certain universities, a leading nation-wide organisation, the Students for a Democratic Society, was founded in 1960 and coordinated the activities of the student movement in the sixties. Despite its commendable activities petty-bourgeois ideological weaknesses and failure to grasp the need for organizational discipline led to its disintegration in 1969. Out of the former SDS a number of small petty-bourgeois radical and anarchist sects emerged which mainly preached individual acts of terror, racism and anti-communism (for instance the Weathermen and the National Caucus of Labor Committees).

Young people in the social protest movements took an active part in the struggle against racism. They fought for the enforcement of the desegregation law of schools, of all public institutions and for the registration of black voters. They used sit-ins¹³ to desegregate restaurants and stores, swim-ins for swimming pools and kneel-ins for churches. At the beginning of the sixties freedom rides were organized to desegregate interstate traffic. Through freedom schools young students wanted to decrease the rate of illiteracy among the black population of the South and to inform their black pupils about black history and culture, about the power structure in the country, about the civil rights movement.

The struggle against racism was carried out by individual young people as well as by special organisations. Important anti-racist youth organisations were the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and later the Black Panther Party.

SNCC was founded as an association of the participants in sit-in campaigns in 1960. Since Stokely Carmichael, leader of the organisation in the mid-sixties, proclaimed the "Black Power" concept in 1966, SNCC moved from advocacy of non-violence to active militancy and black separatism, SNCC collapsed and some of its members entered the Black Panther Party or other organisations.

The BPP was founded as a black self-defence organisation in 1966. It consisted largely of young people. At the end of the sixties it showed Marxist-Leninist tendencies and wanted to cooperate with the anti-racist white section of the population. It worked together with the Communist Party in some campaigns. The BPP attacked the capitalist system as the major reason for racial problems and was therefore systematically attacked by the government. At present the BPP is split up into different sections, most of which advocate either guerilla-

warfare in the big cities or the concept of "Black Capitalism" or opportunist ideologies.

Within the social protest movements young people represented the main force in the struggle against war. Many protested by refusing to serve in the army fighting in South-East Asia. Some soldiers deserted from the US Army and sought asylum in other countries.

There was also organized resistance to the war in Indochina. A national organisation of servicemen was set up, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. This organisation was founded by GIs who had returned from Vietnam. It organized peace marches and rallies against the war.

In addition the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice (PCPJ) joined the fight to end the war. The PCPJ was a multiple-issue coalition of different organisations. The Vietnam Veterans Against the War and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for instance (i.e., not only youth organisations) belonged to this peace movement coalition.

Young people considered the high rate of poverty in the USA one of the main moral weaknesses of capitalist society. They worked in slum and ghetto areas of the South and of the big northern cities. They tried to supply poor people with jobs and the children with food.

Leading youth organisations dealing with these programmes were the Black Panther Party, the Students for a Democratic Society and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Young workers have organized militant strikes in support of their economic demands. The greatest growth of militancy and political consciousness has been observed among young black workers, but it has not been confined to them. There are anti-union tendencies among some young workers because they consider most unions reactionary. Nevertheless, many young workers have played a decisive role in the rank-and-file upsurge to revive the trade unions as organisations of class struggle.

Different organisations participated in the special protest campaigns. Of course students who protested against the growing influence of the military-industrial complex took part in anti-war demonstrations as well. The fight against poverty was connected with the civil rights movement and so forth.

The social protest movements were influenced by New Leftist ideas to a great extent. The term New Left stands for a heterogeneous petty-bourgeois ideological, socio-political and cultural current which developed in the sixties and was especially based on leftist students and intellectuals. They considered themselves Left because they wanted to abolish the ruling social system. They considered themselves New because they viewed the progressive upsurge of the sixties as a new beginning and mostly rejected the relevance of Marxism-Leninism and of the Communist Party for today. Contrary to the Communist movement, denounced as the Old Left, at the beginning the New Left only agreed with the early writings of Karl Marx and entirely rejected the relevance of Leninism. The New Left was especially influenced by the writings of Herbert

Marcuse, Erich Fromm, C. Wright Mills, David Riesman, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Frantz Fanon, Régis Debray and other mainly petty-bourgeois philosophers and sociologists. Therefore early-Marxian, Maoist, Trotskyite, anarchist, existentialist, pacifist, neo-Freudian and other ideas as well as the refusal of any ideology were spread among them. At the beginning they did not recognize the working class as the leading revolutionary force. American workers, who seldom took part in the political protest campaigns of the sixties, to a great extent restricted themselves to the fight for economic aims so the young people considered students, oppressed minorities and the lumpenproletariat the leading revolutionary forces.

The Students for a Democratic Society, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Northern Student Movement, the Southern Students Organizing Committee, the New University Conference, and the National Mobilisation Committee were the major organisations and groups of the New Left. As individuals or as members of the above-mentioned organisations young people who held New Leftist ideas participated in the struggles against some of the evils of the capitalist system. On the one hand they activated democratic forces and on the other hand they led to the decline of the social protest movements because of ideological weaknesses.

At the beginning of the sixties the social protest movement as a whole started with the fight against what were, in the young people's opinion, the "immoral" aspects of capitalism, and was carried out by peaceful means.

Soon the young people had to recognize that they had achieved little success and they decided to combine their moral with socio-political protests. The most advanced young people came to the conclusion that a change of society was necessary for the solution of problems caused by the crisis of capitalism and that a change could only be brought about with the support of the working class. Therefore their interest in Marxist-Leninist ideology grew.

As little success was achieved two other main tendencies developed within the youth protest movements in addition to the growing interest in Marxism-Leninism: disillusioned passivity and extremism. These two tendencies were manipulated by the mass media. The spread of extremism served the ruling class to distract these young people from real revolutionary struggle and to give the pretext for official suppression of all protest activities in the long run.

At the end of the sixties, the political youth protest movements began to decline in the USA. The young people demanded a change of society but they did not possess a common ideology and platform for achieving this goal. They had no clear concept of the new society they desired. Another shortcoming was their rejection of organisation and leadership. In addition, various youth organisations, for instance the Trotskyite Young Socialist Alliance (youth organisation of the Socialist Workers Party) and the Young People's Socialist League, split the protest movement by sectarianism and violence.

A new situation had developed with the enforcement of some reforms and

laws and, at the beginning of the seventies, with the end of the Vietnam war. As some main demands of the youth protest movements were realized a new common programme, which could not be worked out because of the petty-bourgeois character of these movements, was more necessary than ever. Besides, the cyclical crisis had deepened and unemployment and the serious economic situation became the major problems for young workers as well as for students. In addition, the ruling class now answered the challenge to the establishment by brutal police and National Guard suppression of all protest activities and by repressive laws under the slogan "law and order".

With the decline of the political youth protest movements at the end of the sixties, right wing, reactionary organisations have increasingly developed and extended their influence. One organisation of this type is the National Caucus of Labor Committees. It receives financial support from the FBI. Its terrorist actions of violence are directed against the Communist Party and its youth organisation as well as against other progressive organisations and militant workers. Another right-wing organisation, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, is a conservative student organisation, which was founded in 1953 and especially gained importance at the end of the sixties.

All organisations of this type have been supported by pro-governmental circles in order to propagate the values of capitalist society, which had been questioned by the militant, protesting young people.

Communist Party and Youth

Since the thirties the Communist Party has paid special attention to the problems of exploited and oppressed young people. Together with its youth organisation, the Young Communist League, the CPUSA won great influence in the upsurge of the democratic youth movement of the thirties. The YCL, for instance, actively took part and played a leading role in the progressive activities of the American Youth Congress which fought for young people's economic and political rights, for their right to organize in trade unions, against racial discrimination and for a progressive Youth Act.

After the years of the McCarthyite persecution, in the course of which the communist youth organisation had been destroyed, the W. E. B Du Bois Clubs¹⁴, which had close fraternal ties to the CP, were founded in 1962 as a new left youth organisation and were united on a national basis in June, 1964. In the sixties the Du Bois Clubs joined in all struggles of concern for young Americans—employment, education, civil rights, peace. This socialist youth organisation, which was largely composed of students, recognized the leading role of the working class and therefore concentrated its activities on involving young workers in politics. It founded Marxist circles for working youth and other youth in the protest movements in order to acquaint them with Marxism-Leninism. By their activities the Du Bois Clubs tried to

put into practice the youth policy of the CP, which stated in its programme:

"Youth displays vitality, initiative, daring and idealism. To be effective instruments of social change, these qualities must be employed not blindly, but with understanding of the forces in conflict. That which capitalist society denies youth can only be reclaimed in battle against monopoly domination, in alliance with the working class."¹⁵

At the end of the sixties, the CP had overcome its semi-legal status and was strengthened by the democratic struggles of that time. Therefore it could implement its youth policy through the foundation of a young workers' communist youth organisation, and could give it more assistance. The CP also recognized that with the upsurge of the youth movement in the USA the student-based Du Bois Clubs did not any longer satisfy the growing interest of progressive young people in Marxism-Leninism.

The Young Workers Liberation League, a Marxist-Leninist youth organisation, was founded in February, 1970. It publishes its own paper, the "Young Worker". The membership of the organisation consists basically of young workers from key industries. There are strong groups of students as well. The YWLL unites young people of various nationalities and ethnic groups: Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Asians and white Americans. Women are also a decisive part of the membership. The YWLL is affiliated to, and co-operates with, the World Federation of Democratic Youth. Recognizing the leading role of the working class, the YWLL sees the only alternative to the existing imperialist system in a socialist revolution. In order to contribute to the realisation of this aim, it has made it its main daily task to unite all US-youth, young workers and students, Black, Brown and White, men and women, in the struggle "against war, racism and repression" and "for the right to earn, learn and live". This daily task corresponds to the programme of the CPUSA, which states that the American road to socialism lies in a democratic struggle by an anti-monopoly people's coalition. In all its activities, support of working youth's economic and political demands, the fight to free political prisoners, electoral campaigns and co-operation with progressive organisations, for instance, the YWLL helps to build a united youth front and influences democratic movements in a Marxist-Leninist direction.

The CP and its youth organisation show the only way out of the capitalist crisis, which so much affects the great majority of young people,—the fight for socialism. Socialism can solve the present problems and guarantee youth a secure future and all-round development of personality.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Cf. *Die Weltbühne*, Berlin, 52/1974, p. 1654.
- 2) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 1655.
- 3) Cf. *Neues Deutschland*, Berlin, 27. 7. 1973, p. 7.
- 4) Cf. *Around the World*, Berlin, 9/1974, p. 6.
- 5) Cf. *SŠA*, Moscow, No. 11, 1975, p. 60.
- 6) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 59.
- 7) Cf. *Zarubežnye molodežnye organizacii* – *spravočnik*, Moskva 1973, pp. 280; 283.
- 8) Cf. *Brychkov, A.*, *American Youth Today*, Moscow 1973, pp. 46–47.
- 9) Cf. *Zarubežnye molodežnye organizacii* – *spravočnik*, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
- 10) Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 279–280.
- 11) Cf. *Neues Deutschland*, Berlin, 24. 3. 1973, p. 5.
- 12) Cf. *Horizont*, Berlin, 27/1977, p. 18.
- 13) The sit-in movement started in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1960 and was mainly carried out in the South until the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964.
- 14) Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963) was an outstanding black social scientist, historian and pioneer in the black liberation struggle. He was one of the original founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. For his life-long fight for peace he was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize. As a consequence of his struggle and scholarly work he joined the Communist Party USA in 1961.
- 15) *New Program of the Communist Party USA*, New York 1970. p. 76.

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The Trade Union Movement in the USA

The Development of Trade Unions in the USA

The first North American unions originated at the end of the 18th century, when local workers' organisations were formed, such as those of the Philadelphia cobblers' (1792) and the New York printers (1793), which had a strong guild character. At the beginning of the 19th century the first centralised organisations were created. In 1827 the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations was formed in Philadelphia. In 1834 a further attempt was made to merge the unions into central organisations with the foundation of the National Trade Union in New York. However, the NTU only remained in existence for three years; as frequently happened to other unions in those days, the NTU was destroyed during situations of crisis.

After the Civil War of 1861–1865 the American labour movement made a significant move forward. In 1866 the National Labor Union was formed. In the spirit of the great revolution which had just been completed the National Labor Union initially carried out generally progressive policies. It announced its intention of organising the entire working class without regard to race, sex or religion.¹ The NLU fought for the 8-hour day, equal rights for working women and against racial discrimination. It maintained contacts with the international labour movement. Its leader, William H. Sylvis, was in touch with Karl Marx. After Sylvis' death (1869) its leadership was substantially weakened. This situation, together with unsuccessful attempts to implement radical yet partially utopian projects of reform, gradually weakened the influence of the NLU in the workers' associations. In 1872 it discontinued its activities.

Meanwhile another labour organisation, the Knights of Labor, founded in 1869, had started up and made an important contribution to the formation of the American trade unions.

Friedrich Engels characterised the Knights of Labor as "die erste von der gesamten amerikanischen Arbeiterklasse geschaffene nationale Organisation."² They announced as their aim the liberation of working people from wage-slavery. They did not only organise skilled workers, but also unskilled workers, women and Blacks. However, the organisation's leadership became increasingly dominated by petit-bourgeois radical forces which often neglected the workers' daily struggle for social demands in favour of utopian projects of reform, and did not support the popular struggle propagated by the AFL for the 8-hour day, a mistake which substantially limited the influence of the organisation on the craft unions.³

In the mid-'80s—after the foundation of the AFL—the organisation lost its

significance. To the same extent that the Knights of Labor gradually abandoned their position in the class struggle, trade-unionism slowly gained the upper hand in the union movement of the USA.

The American Federation of Labour (AFL), founded in 1881, which had been mainly created by the professional unions and had broken with the Knights of Labor, quickly developed into the union association with the strongest membership in the USA. It was the first centralised trade union which took in only workers and distinguished itself in the first phase of its development in its struggle for the 8-hour day (see also the "Haymarket Affair"). The strengthening of the professional unions—their numerical growth—occurred in the period of economic prosperity in the second half of the 1890's and at the beginning of the 20th century. At that time the great demand for labour and the capitalists' massive profits enabled the professional unions to obtain high wage increases relatively easily.⁴ Thus reformist illusions about the possibility of improving their situation were encouraged among large sections of the American working class with the aid of unpolitical, trade-union methods, a tendency exploited in the interests of class collaboration by the right-wing union leaders centred around AFL president Samuel Gompers. The AFL, which had taken up a relatively progressive position in the first years of its existence, was increasingly orientated towards co-operation with the employers by its leaders. This attitude may have weakened the fighting strength of the American working class, but could not put the entire US union movement under the control of the AFL.

In 1905, not least as a reaction against the failure of the AFL leadership, the most militant section of the American unions created its own association, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), led by William Haywood. The Industrial Workers of the World turned against the policy of class harmony, as propagated by the AFL leaders, placed itself at the head of a series of important strikes, and put forward socialist aims. With their inflexible militant spirit they contributed towards a developed consciousness of class solidarity in many American workers. However, the influence of anarcho-syndicalist and left radical elements had a negative effect on the association. In connection with the Palmer Raids the IWW was greatly weakened in the beginning of the 20's.

After the First World War the class struggle in the USA was intensified. At this time the American workers undertook a series of significant strikes. In Seattle (Washington State) in February 1919 60,000 workers from 110 union organisations united in a massive General Strike for higher wages and an 8-hour day. For days the town's destiny was controlled by the strike committee. Yet as a result of the treacherous attitude of the right-wing AFL leaders, who capitulated to the government's threats of force, an imminent victory was lost.

From September 1919 until January 1920 the steelworkers of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois carried out strikes against the de facto 12-hour day, against bad working conditions, for higher wages and for the establishment of

union rights of organisation and collective representation of interests, strikes in which 365,000 workers (90% of all those employed in steel production) took part.⁵ In bloody battles with the police and the National Guard numerous workers were killed.

At the same time, 400,000 coal miners were struggling for the realisation of their social demands. Despite the AFL's decision to end the strike, the miners carried on till March 1920 and achieved the partial success of a wage increase of 27%. These mass strikes produced a further growth in union membership, which exceeded 5 million for the first time in 1920.⁶ But that was the highest degree of union organisation for a long time to come. It was not attained again until the mid-30's after a period of decline and stagnation, occasioned by the consequences of the Palmer Raids and by prosperity. There were also massive union actions in the years of the crisis of 1921 to 1923. In 1922 600,000 coal-miners and 400,000 railwaymen were among those who went on strike.⁷ In several of the strikes of that time Communists (William Z. Foster and others) stood in the front line. However, the strikes of the 20's were no longer as numerous as in the years following the war. Their character, too, had changed substantially. Whereas the struggles from 1918 to 1920, despite defeats, had been of a markedly offensive nature, at the beginning of the 20's they assumed a defensive nature and were essentially directed against the attacks of capital on the social standards of the working class.

In the period of relative stabilisation of capitalism from 1924–1928, which was characterised in the USA by a significant economic growth, by a certain rise in income for sections of the working population, in particular for skilled workers and white-collar workers, and by a temporary decline in unemployment, the American union movement underwent a difficult time of stagnation. The intensified attacks of the employers on workers' organisations, including the foundation of non-affiliated company unions, and the capitulation policies of the right-wing union leadership, centred around AFL president William Green (who succeeded S. Gompers at his death in 1924), inflicted great harm on the fighting strength of the US union movement. The AFL leaders intensified their anti-Communist policies within the trade unions. They spread the concepts of popular capitalism and American exceptionalism and carried out a non-strike policy. Union membership dropped steadily and in 1929 reached a low ebb of 3.6 million⁸, almost one and a half million below the level of 1920. The number of strikes sank rapidly.

Yet the progressive forces managed to organise nationwide activities, such as the campaigns against the Sacco and Vanzetti verdict and for the diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. Although the years of the economic crisis of 1929–33 were characterised in the USA by a relatively low level of strike activity, class struggles were intensified. The workers defended themselves desperately against catastrophic unemployment and general social insecurity (from October 1929 to January 1930 the number of unemployed in the USA increased suddenly from half a million to over 4 million and in 1932 reached a

record level of 17 million, or 35% of the working population)⁹. At this time the most powerful forms of struggle were the protest demonstrations and hunger marches of the unemployed. On the 6th of March 1930 1.5 million unemployed demonstrated in the industrial towns of the USA. Protest and hunger marches by the unemployed took place in 1931 and 1932. The National Unemployed Council, created by the Communist Party and the progressive forces organised in the Trade Union Unity League (a member of the Red International of Trade Unions) had a decisive share in the organisation of the actions of protest by the unemployed.

These mass actions contributed to the further development of the American workers' militant consciousness. At the same time they demonstrated the militant potential that lay in the masses of semi- and unskilled industrial workers, who had been denied entry to the guild unions of the AFL up till then. In many branches of industry in the '30s there arose union organisations which burst the professional barriers and organised on the industrial principle.

With the rise of the American labour movement in the 30's it became clear that hitherto-existing methods of violent suppression of the union's struggle by the employers and their abettors in the AFL leadership were not suited to stem the increasing organisation of the workers. The state monopolist power machine demanded more flexible methods to integrate the American union movement into the capitalist system. This aim was also served by the liberal union laws introduced by Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933–1945) within the framework of the New Deal. In the National Recovery Act (1933) and the National Labor Relations Act (1935) also known as the Wagner Act, some of the unions' basic rights were fixed for the first time in the history of the USA, such as the right to organise, the right to collective bargaining and—with limitations, which were the expression of state monopolist control—also the right to strike.

Although these policies of Roosevelt's were directed at establishing an alliance between union bureaucracy and the state monopoly machine, they still offered the democratic forces in the unions possibilities of legalising and building up their activities.

In the steel, automobile, textile and electrical industries, as well as in other branches of industry there arose strong industrial unions, in which the Communist Party and other progressive forces exercised an important influence. In 1935 these unions formed the Committee of Industrial Organisations within the AFL. Since the militant policies of the member unions of this committee did not fit in with the reformist conceptions of the AFL leadership, they left the AFL and created a new union association in 1938—the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), of which John Lewis became the president.

The CIO quickly gained influence. In its propaganda and practical work a leading part was played by the CPUSA and thousands of Communist organisers. In 1939 it already numbered 4.5 million members (AFL—4 million)¹⁰. But even the CIO was not politically unified. The progressive forces were opposed by a right-wing, reformist, anti-Communist group led by David Dubinsky and

Philipp Murray, who were working towards subordinating the CIO unions to the AFL.

Despite its militant spirit, which it proved in its struggles with the employers, and despite its progressive political orientation the CIO was not able to break the chains of narrow trade-unionism and reformism. Despite the influence of revolutionary forces in some of its industrial unions, the CIO remained an organisation integrated into the capitalist system. Under the leadership of Philipp Murray, who took over the presidency from John Lewis in 1940, the CIO leaders turned even more decisively towards collaboration with the government and the employers. Murray was a representative of the ideology of social partnership. He declared publicly: "We have no classes in our country. We're all workers here."¹¹

After the end of the Second World War the representatives of the liberal New Deal were forced out and the reactionary forces of monopoly capitalism took state power into their own hands. The main aim of the new policies was to build up the position of the USA as the leading imperialist power, to hinder further changes in the world balance of power to the advantage of socialism and to destroy the socialist world system. To this end monopoly capitalism needed a labour movement which was in line with its imperialist plans. The anti-Communist hysteria of the cold war was used by US imperialists and the union bureaucracy, which collaborated with them, to check the influence of world socialism on the American working population, to isolate the communists and other progressive forces from the masses, and to suppress all democratic, anti-imperialist movements in the unions.

On June 23, 1947, the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act (Labor Management Relations Act) was passed. It obliged the unions to report all strikes to the bosses 60 days in advance and granted the President the right to order a further "cooling-off period" of 80 days. Solidarity strikes were completely prohibited. The main blow was directed against communist unionists; all union officials had to give a sworn assurance before the Labor Relations Board that they did not belong to the CP and did not maintain any contact with it. Thus political work within the unions was extensively paralysed. The unions were greatly hindered in their work by the fact that their finances were controlled and administered by the National Labor Relations Board.

This created the legal basis for the suppression of the progressive forces of the Labor movement and guaranteed the leading position in the unions of the USA in the long run to the reactionary union bureaucracy.

In this anti-communist hysteria 11 progressive industrial unions with a membership of more than 900,000, which had fought against the Taft-Hartley Act, were excluded from the CIO. This made possible a merger with the AFL on an anti-communist basis. In December 1955 the two associations became united as the AFL-CIO, which became the largest union organisation in the USA with 15 million members.

The Role of the AFL-CIO in US-Imperialist Policy and its Divisive Function in the International Trade Union Movement

The foreign policy of the leadership of the AFL-CIO has hardly differed from the foreign policy of the US monopolies in the past, indeed it has proved to be a pioneer and an essential aid to them in gaining influence on a global scale. AFL-CIO foreign policy, like that of US imperialism in general, is mainly aimed against Communism, and manifests itself in a bitter resistance to the growing influence of the forces of socialism in the world. The right-wing trade union leadership in the USA has for years been an important and effective tool of US imperialism in gaining influence for its foreign policy, especially in the field of ideological conflict. The president of the AFL-CIO, George Meany, said that, as the enemy which they were facing was a total enemy, it could not be overcome or held in check by military means alone, however important that might be; for that reason they were fighting it with moral, political, social and cultural as well as military means.¹²

With this anti-Communist doctrine the AFL-CIO gives direct support to the expansionist policy of US imperialism. It has been given the task of especially influencing such sections of the population in capitalist countries and in young national states which can only be influenced to a limited extent by the state policy and propaganda of the USA. In this process the AFL-CIO makes use not only of propaganda but also of political pressure and especially financial blackmail.

The right-wing leaders of the US trade unions have done everything to hold down the mass upsurge of democratic forces in European countries since World War II or to guide them along reformist lines more acceptable to them. In this, they were anxious to create reactionary workers' associations in such countries as France and Italy, where it was not possible for them to destroy the dominant influence of the revolutionary and democratic forces in the trade unions. The leadership of the AFL and rightwing forces in the CIO played a decisive role in the formation of the International Federation of Free Trade Unions, founded in 1949, and helped to create its anti-communist and anti-Soviet bias. Until 1968, because of its political influence in the Social Democratic trade union movement of the capitalist countries and its financial strength, the AFL-CIO played an important role in deciding the policies of the International Federation of Free Trade Unions, which was intended to suppress socialist ideas within the labour movement in capitalist countries, to prevent all contacts with trade union organisations in socialist countries and to maintain the pro-capitalist positions of the reformist trade union movement. This opportunity for the AFL-CIO of gaining influence has been significantly limited by the conditions of the change in the balance of power and of the gradually developing readiness of numerous member organisations of the International Federation of Free Trade Unions to adopt a more realistic attitude towards the trade unions of the socialist countries organised in the World Federation of Trade Unions. The establishment of so-

called "eastern contacts" by the British TUC and the DGB of the Federal Republic of Germany and other trade unions belonging to the International Federation of Free Trade Unions caused the AFL-CIO to stop its subscription to the International Federation of Free Trade Unions and to leave the organisation at the beginning of 1969.

In this, however, the AFL-CIO by no means closed its channels of influence on the International Federation of Free Trade Unions but retained the membership of its individual trade unions in associations of the International Federation of Free Trade Unions.

International détente and especially the developing co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States has been a thorn in the flesh of the leaders of the AFL-CIO. Meany propounded a theory that economic co-operation and trade relations with the socialist countries could only be of use to "Communism". In the years of the Vietnam war the AFL-CIO leadership fully supported this genocide, using the barbarous argument that production for this war meant full employment for American workers, besides its traditional anti-communist argumentation. In May 1973 the executive council of the AFL-CIO passed a resolution saying that trade with communist governments was no routine matter but an entirely political matter and that for such trade the principle was to apply that it had to serve the national interests of their country and the interests of the whole "free world".¹³ What the Meany clique understands by "the interests of the whole free world" is made clear by their demand that the US Senate use economic relations "to exercise influence on the arbitrary and capricious emigration policies of the USSR, of the East German régime and other totalitarian governments in Central and Eastern Europe."¹⁴

Recently the AFL-CIO has been trying to increase its pressure on the right-wing reformist trade unions in Western and Northern Europe in order to prevent co-operation of the European trade unions in the International Federation of Free Trade Unions with the organisations of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Its diversionary activity against the European Trade Union Conference is, however, finding ever-diminishing support. Although the AFL-CIO leadership still has active followers at its disposal in some Western and North European trade unions, its direct influence in Europe has weakened in recent years. The AFL-CIO places great value on its work in the developing countries, which is aimed at guiding these countries off the non-capitalist road of development. The regional institutes, which it has created and over which George Meany presided, are financed by the AFL-CIO with the help of funds from the foreign service of the CIA. Their task is to educate trade union personnel in these countries to support the expansionist foreign policy of the USA. The aim of their activities is the establishment of "free" anti-communist trade unions in the developing countries, integrated into the capitalist power system; they are intended as willing champions of the cause of AFL-CIO policy. In this, the AFL-CIO propagates the theory that these trade unions can only work successfully in the framework of capitalist society¹⁵.

The Process of Political Differentiation in the US Trade Union Movement

The pro-imperialist policies of the AFL-CIO leadership and their followers on the executive committees of the industrial trade unions and their compromising policy and bureaucracy are meeting with increasing disapproval from an ever-growing section of the ordinary membership and the lower organs of management. These forces, known as the rank-and-file movement, are the pillars of the anti-monopolist fighting tradition of the American labour movement. They carry decisive weight in some industrial and professional trade unions of the USA. Firstly, one must mention two autonomous trade unions, which have been expelled from the CIO because of their progressive attitudes and have held their anti-monopolist position against massive reactionary attacks for more than two decades:

the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union

President: Harry Bridges

United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America

President: Albert Fitzgerald

These organisations make an effort to win the socio-political demands made by their workers on the monopolies and stand for international détente and co-operation. In recent years the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)—its president is Leonard Woodcock—has taken up a similar position after leaving the AFL-CIO in 1968 because of political differences with the Meany leadership. Progressive forces have strengthened their influence in a number of organisations of the AFL-CIO, for example:

in the United Mineworkers' Union (UMW), which removed the corrupt and criminal clique leadership which had gathered around Tony Boyle (responsible for the murder of Joseph Yablonski who opposed the corrupt leaders of the UMW) and elected a progressive leadership with president Arnold Miller;

in the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), whose president Jerry Wurf belongs to the few opposition members in the executive council of the AFL-CIO;

in the Amalgamated Meat Cutters' and Butcher Workers' Union (AMCBW);

in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) at lower management levels, and in other organisations.

These forces differ in their politics from the AFL-CIO leadership in the following way: firstly, by standing for the development of democracy within the trade unions and by their resistance to the despotic methods of leadership employed by the Meany group. Secondly, by their efforts to represent the socio-political interests of their members more decisively and to offer stronger resistance to the anti-working-class social policy of the US government and big business.

Thirdly, by a more realistic attitude to questions of international politics, by involvement in the US peace movement as well as readiness to form ties with the trade unions of the socialist countries.

These forces urged the ending of the Vietnam war, founded the committee "Labor for Peace" in 1972 and sent a delegation to the World Congress of Peace Forces in Moscow in 1973. They have supported the process of international détente and the developing co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States. Some of these organisations have already formed ties with the trade unions of the Soviet Union and of other socialist countries.

The Intensification of the Social Contradictions in the USA and the Struggles of the Trade Unions

The working class in the capitalist countries is recognising more and more that the combined pressure of the monopolies and the state on working and living conditions only complicates every step for actual improvement in their situation and can only be answered with more intense struggles and their own co-ordinated actions¹⁶.

Social insecurity has significantly increased in the USA in recent years. Claiming that inflation has to a great extent been caused by the "excessive" wage-claims of the workers, Nixon ordered a total wage-freeze in August 1971. Thus after only three months of these restrictive measures coming into effect the workers of the metal and automobile industry, the dockers and transport workers, and workers in other branches of industry were cheated of more than one thousand million dollars in wages, to which they had a right because of the increase in rates they had won from big business shortly before.

Simultaneously, Nixon aided big business by means of a tax relief of 1% for industrial firms. In "phase two" of the wage-price control, which was extended over the whole of 1972, a payboard, consisting of 5 representatives from big business, 5 from the trade unions and 5 from the general public, and a government price commission had the task of playing watch-dog over the relations between wages and prices. Here a characteristic example was given of how the state monopolist apparatus of power tries to shift the burden of the Vietnam War, of the capitalist currency crisis and inflation onto the shoulders of the workers. How one-sidedly the restrictive measures were directed at decreasing the income of the workers is proved by the fact that the consumer prices of some important foodstuffs, such as meat, vegetables and fruit, were not included and underwent unrestricted price increases. The state monopoly attempt at regulating the economy failed because of the greed of the US monopolies. In 1973 Nixon had to more or less repeal the wage-price control. In the meantime the cost of living in the USA has soared. In 1973 the prices of foodstuffs increased by an average of 14.5%¹⁷.

The prices of products of everyday use and the costs of heating and rents have risen faster than nominal wages. Thus a worker's real income sank in 1974 by an average of 15%.

Unemployment has taken on catastrophic dimensions. The number of completely unemployed reached 8 million in January 1975 (8.8%)¹⁸. Unemployment among young people is especially high, reaching 15%. Unemployment among the Blacks is more than twice as high as among white Americans.

The purchasing power of the US population sank in 1974 below the 1965 level. On the other hand the monopolies have been able to maintain and raise their profits. They increased by 19% in the first quarter of 1974, by 28% in the second quarter and by 29.6% in the third quarter compared to the same time the year before¹⁹.

The main demand the trade unions are making on the government and big business with ever-increasing pressure is for stopping inflation, measures against the price speculation of the monopolies and a solution to the unemployment problem. The trade unions challenged the Ford government and Congress to pass job safety laws intended to prevent multi-national monopolies from moving production to countries with a cheaper labour force, putting arbitrary limitations on production and even putting certain factories out of production.

Numerous industrial trade unions have managed to introduce what are called sliding-scale clauses into collective bargaining agreements with big business so as to keep pace with price increases. Thus wage rates are automatically raised by a certain percentage in definite periods of time. These wage adjustments have until now however always lagged behind price increases.

Further important socio-political demands are the introduction of a unified system of social services and expenditure, the long awaited passing of the planned National Insurance Health Act, the raising of pensions, the payment of higher compensation to the unemployed and to unemployable invalids, the implementation of a tax reform in the interest of the lower income levels, a solution to the catastrophic housing problem and the restriction of rent increases. Even the AFL-CIO has been forced to support these demands.

Many industrial trade unions have taken significant strike actions in recent years. The number of strikes has risen especially since the second half of the 60's. Between 1964 and 1968 they rose from 3,600 to over 5,000, while the number of days of work lost rose from 22.9 to 49.2 million²⁰. 1970 brought a record of over 5,600 strikes, in which more than 66 million working days were lost and in which 3.3 million working people took part²¹. In 1973 2.2 million strikers took part in 5,600 strikes with a loss of 27 million working days²².

The workers in electrical engineering were very active in the struggles, striking in 280 factories of General Electric in 33 federal states of the USA from October 1969 to January 1970. After 98 days the 150,000 workers had won a uniform collective agreement, the first in many years. 400,000 auto workers struck in over 100 factories of General Motors from mid-September to mid-November 1970 and likewise achieved a new collective bargaining agreement.

Noteworthy is the growing number of actions of solidarity with such trade unions as have met especially stubborn resistance from big business. Other trade unions gave great support to the struggle of the United Farmworkers' Association (UFWA), mainly consisting of Mexicans, and of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' of America (ACWA), in which 110,000 workers are organised and which in June 1974 called the first general strike since 1921. There were strikes in 750 factories²³. The outcome was higher wages and an improvement in social services.

120,000 members of the United Mineworkers' Union demonstrated their growing militancy in November/December 1974 in a twenty-four-day strike against the escalation of prices and taxes, for higher wages and better safety measures in the mines²⁴. The mine-owners were forced to make important concessions.

At present we can expect a further increase in strike activity in the trade union movement of the USA. The resistance of the working people to social insecurity and the burdens of prices is growing. The pressure of the trade union members on their reformist leaderships is increasing. To a greater extent than in the past clerks, civil servants and teachers as well as a growing section of the unorganised working class are also taking part in the struggles. The social struggles of the American working people are attaining a greater political significance in the present national and international situation.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Cf. *Foster, W. Z.*, *Abriß der Geschichte der Weltgewerkschaftsbewegung*, Berlin 1960, p. 109.
- 2) *Marx, K./F. Engels*, *Werke*, Vol. 21, p. 341.
- 3) Cf. *Koremezkij, J. M.*, *USA—Trade Unions in the Struggle against Capital*, Moscow 1970, p. 13 (in Russian).
- 4) Cf. *ibid.*
- 5) Cf. *Foster, W. Z.*, *The Great Steel Strike and its Lessons*, New York 1920, p. 101.
- 6) Cf. *Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung der USA*, Vol. I, p. 76.
- 7) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 81.
- 8) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 158.
- 9) Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 203, 204.
- 10) *Androsow, W. P.*, *The Trade Unions of the USA in Conditions of State-Monopoly Capitalism*, Moscow 1971, p. 71 (in Russian).
- 11) *Boyer, R. O./H. M. Morais*, *Labor's Untold Story*, New York 1955, p. 351.
- 12) "Freigewerkschaftliche Nachrichten" AFL-CIO, August 1967, p. 8.
- 13) Cf. "Freigewerkschaftliche Nachrichten" AFL-CIO, May 1973, p. 1.
- 14) *Ibid.*
- 15) Cf. "Freigewerkschaftliche Nachrichten" AFL-CIO, June 1969, p. 2.

- 16) Cf. IPW-Berichte, Berlin, No. 9, 1974, p. 57.
- 17) Cf. Weltwirtschaft und internationale Beziehungen, Moscow, 1974, No. 8, supplement, p. 47.
- 18) Cf. Horizont, Berlin, No. 19, 1975, p. 19.
- 19) Cf. AFL-CIO News, 14/1974 and 2/11/1974.
- 20) Cf. Bogdanow, A. S., Power and Powerlessness of the Dollar, Moscow 1971, p. 78 (in Russian).
- 21) Cf. Weltwirtschaft und internationale Politik, Moscow, 1971, No. 4, p. 16.
- 22) Cf. Horizont, Berlin, No. 19, 1975, p. 21.
- 23) Cf. IPW-Berichte, Berlin, No. 9, 1975, p. 59.
- 24) Cf. Horizont, Berlin, No. 3, 1975, p. 11.

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The Communist Party of the USA

If one were to draw a picture of America exclusively determined by the decline and decay, the corruption and disintegration of the imperialist system, one would do justice neither to the dialectics of social interrelations nor to the historic role of the great people of the United States. What is true of the rulers does not apply equally to those who are ruled, from whose ranks have arisen the progressive forces which will one day possess the potential for radical change in the leading country of the world of yesterday.

If one analyses the history of the other America, then mention must first be made of the heroic Communist Party of the USA, which has been conducting its brave struggle for more than six decades under unparalleled conditions—literally in the lion's den.

Under the direct influence of the victorious October Revolution, and at the climax of a series of embittered strikes by the American proletariat, the most progressive forces of the Socialist Party formed themselves first of all in 1919 into two communist parties¹, whose process of unification and consolidation into the Communist Party of the USA was successfully completed by 1921. The first Marxist-Leninist worker's party was thereby able to appeal with good reason to the best traditions of the revolutionary working-class movement of the country. As early as the 1860s and 70s some of the first Marxists, who had come from the Communist League, had been active in North America, men like Joseph Weydemeyer, close friend and collaborator of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, whom President Abraham Lincoln had appointed as Brigadier General in the Union Army during the Civil War, in recognition of his military abilities and personal integrity. Later, Workers' Associations sprang up, and were transformed in 1900/01, on the initiative of the important socialist leader Eugene V. Debs and others, into a Socialist Party, whose influence increased rapidly particularly at the time of the First World War. Great strikes by steelworkers and stockyard workers—to mention only two examples—were led by such left-wing socialist union leaders as William Z. Foster, who was one of the outstanding members of the Communist Party of the USA and was later its popular chairman for decades. The pronounced internationalist attitude of the new Communist Party manifested itself, alongside many other activities, in an impressive campaign for the recognition of the Soviet Union, the first socialist state.

Soon after the formation of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard—the foundation congress met in the workers' stronghold of Chicago—the CP of the USA faced a brutal attack by its class enemies. On the night of the 2nd January 1920 the Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer, and his assistant, J. Edgar Hoover, from

1924 head of the FBI for 48 years, had more than 10,000 communists, left-wing socialists and other class-conscious workers arrested in one fell swoop in 70 US cities without legal search or arrest warrants. Many of the victims of these raids, which went down in the history of the American working-class movement as the "Palmer Raids", never returned. They were deported, killed, or "shot while attempting to escape." At the time, the bourgeois newspaper, "The New York Times", rejoiced: "The revolution has been smashed".

Yet the party of exploited and oppressed workers gathered new strength and closed its ranks, after the process of ideological clarification had made its contribution, by 1928, to the victory over the views of ultra-leftists and opportunists of the right. Famous struggles against injustice and judicial despotism—above all the protracted campaign organised by the CP of the USA to save the Italian immigrants Sacco and Vanzetti, the "honest cobbler" and the "poor fishmonger", who because of their revolutionary convictions were accused by the ruling classes on a trumped-up charge and later executed, brought the party great esteem. The unflagging theoretical and practical work of communists in the labor unions strengthened the party's influence on the masses. Even at that time the CP of the USA proved itself to be the only political force in the United States which fought consistently against racism and ethnic discrimination for the unity of proletarians of every colour, though a longer period was needed to determine precisely the class content of national and racial questions. For a long time the view predominated that the aim of the struggle must consist of the creation of an autonomous Afro-American region in the black cottonbelt of the South. Only later—especially after the mass migration of Blacks from the Dixieland states to the metropolises of the North—did the conviction spread that the Afro-Americans, nine-tenths of whom belonged to the proletariat, were to be considered above all as class comrades and not primarily as a minority. In the turbulent thirties, when the worldwide economic crisis prefaced by the Wall Street crash robbed millions of American workers of wages and bread, the communists organised powerful demonstrations for the unemployed and hungry. Millions of proletarians, ruined farmers and members of the middle class were confronted more blatantly and directly than ever before with the capitalist class and its mismanagement. The selfless and purposeful political organisation of the communists was an essential contributing factor in the party's attainment during this decade of a hitherto unequalled mass appeal. The Red Decade represents a particularly heroic chapter in the history of the struggles of the CP of the USA.

The party made unceasing efforts to educate the best and most active sections of the working class in the spirit of solidarity. Again and again—as in the case of the Scottsboro Boys (1931), a group of young Alabama Negroes whom a racist judiciary tried to put into the electric chair on a trumped-up charge of rape—it was the Communist Party which energetically mobilised the masses and thus saw to it that a planned legal murder was prevented. Under the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, when the US union movement made great ad-

vances, communist union officials made the decisive contribution in the creation of the CIO. The most important experience of the communists found expression in the union programmes. The present Secretary General of the CP of the USA, Gus Hall, for example, was a co-founder of the Steelworkers' Union which today unites hundreds of thousands of members. He personally led the famous "Little Steelworkers' Strike" in the mid-west, which passed into the proletarian history of this region. It was also the communists who laid the foundations of the United Auto Workers. The ruling class put a bitter resistance in order to hinder the penetration of the unions into the industrial combines. Employers' terror associations, such as the infamous "Black Legion", created by the car bosses in collaboration with the notorious secret organisation Ku Klux Klan, carried out a bloody reign of terror. Quite a few communist union officials were murdered.

As the danger of a second world war drew near—the intervention of Hitler and Mussolini in the Spanish Civil War served the fascists as a dress rehearsal—the CP of the USA stood in the front line against preparations for aggression and aggression itself. As members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, formed from American anti-fascists, hundreds of members of the Communist Party and the Communist Youth League shed their blood on Spanish soil in the fight against the enemies of mankind. More than 15,000 American communists—fine examples of loyalty to the anti-Hitler coalition—fought heroically in the US Army, Navy and Air Force against the Nazis and the Japanese militarists. After the invasion of the Soviet Union by Hitler's armies the CP of the USA used all its influence for the speedy establishment of a second front, which America's ruling circles stubbornly resisted for a long time.

The imperialist overlords of the United States, inaugurating the era of the Cold War almost immediately after the destruction of the fascist-militarist aggressors by the Soviet army and its military allies, rewarded the communists' patriotism with the most monstrous campaign of slander in the history of the USA. In this unprecedented offensive by its powerful enemies, opportunist and revisionist elements aggravated the situation. Towards the end of the war a party fraction centred around the former Secretary General and subsequent renegade Earl Browder had already effectively broken up the party. Subjected to illusions spread by the group of liquidators, the most essential Marxist positions were abandoned, i.e. the dangers of imperialism were underestimated and the necessity of the class struggle denied and replaced by a conciliatory position of class harmony. Browder's attempt to transform the party into a "Communist Political Association" led to serious internal conflicts. A few months after the dissolution, the healthy forces of the party, under the leadership of William Z. Foster, succeeded in reorganising it. These complicated conflicts took place in a period of development of America's internal policy which was prefaced by the extensive destruction of the legality of the CP of the USA. While countless US citizens fell victim to the witch-hunts inspired by Senator Joe McCarthy and were summoned before the notorious "House Committee on Un-American Activities", eleven leaders

of the party, among them Gus Hall and Henry Winston, who lost his sight in long years of imprisonment, were prosecuted under the Smith Act for "participation in a treasonable conspiracy for the violent overthrow of the freely elected government." The demand was placed before the party that, in accordance with the McCarran Act, they should produce their membership lists, so that all communists could be registered as "agents of a foreign power." Many working-class fighters and progressive intellectuals—among them the famous Hollywood Ten (1947)—were incarcerated, whilst in 1953 Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, two unforgettable heroes of the Other America, were even murdered in the electric chair. Parallel to the anti-communist lynch-mania unleashed by influential circles, the reactionary forces in power were making their preparations for planned mass arrests: at the beginning of the Korean War (1950) several large concentration camps, whose complexes of barracks are still intact today, were established "in order to be armed for all eventualities."

In those years of the fanatical terror the connections of the CP of the USA with the masses were systematically disrupted. The opponents of the revolutionary working-class movement succeeded in isolating the party from important organisations and influential streams of the anti-imperialist movement. In this, the McCarthyites rained concentrated blows on the American union movement in particular, from the ranks of which they sought to drive class-conscious and militant leaders. The Taft-Hartley Act, which was passed in 1947, gave the exploiters a convenient lever: under its regulations the rights of the unions were significantly limited and members of leading committees, from shop-stewards to union-presidents, were obliged to sign a statement that they did not belong to the Communist Party. In the middle of 1949, in an atmosphere of general intellectual terror, eleven unions with leftwing leaders and a total membership of 900,000 were excluded by the CIO because of their resistance to the policies of the Cold War. The CIO united in 1955 with the AFL to form a national federation (AFL-CIO).

From 1952 to 1954 the US rulers had recourse to a series of special measures in order to withdraw electoral eligibility from the Communist Party. Proceeding from the Communist Control Act, which was rushed through Congress, and on whose model altogether 29 states passed their own laws to muzzle the communists, candidature to elective offices was forbidden for members of the CP of the USA and "communist front organisations."

In the era of McCarthyism the CP of the USA was forced into a position of extensive isolation. It lost influence and members. Forced out of the unions, discredited in the then still weakly developed Black Liberation Movement by a government-inspired slander campaign, the American communists also lost their active connections with working-class youth. The Communist Youth League was dissolved. The situation was aggravated at this time by attacks on the party line by a factional group centred around the former editor-in-chief of the "Daily Worker", John Gates. The Communist Party also lost its Marxist daily newspaper. But despite these unfavourable conditions—many of the party's

leaders were still in prison—the Marxist-Leninist nucleus of the CP of the USA succeeded in eliminating even this mainly anti-Soviet grouping.

The sixties brought a remarkable growth in popular struggles, initiated first of all by Civil Rights demonstrations, student protests and a series of big strikes, to which were later added activities against the continually escalating war of aggression in Indo-China. Thus the dreams of the anti-communist terrorists came to nought. The desire for the restoration of civil liberties became the demand of millions of Americans. In addition, the changes in the international balance of power to the disadvantage of imperialism cut more and more ground from under the feet of the Cold Warriors. A series of oppressive measures, such as the McCarran Act, had to be revoked or at least suspended. The CP of the USA, whose fighting strength was weakened during the McCarthy era, but not broken, once again won legal status, although many of the restrictions of the past were only reluctantly or partially removed.

At the end of the fifties the party leadership was consolidated: such important Marxist-Leninists as Gus Hall and Henry Winston were placed at its head and took over the function of Secretary General and National Chairman. In the years that followed, the party developed a dynamic strategy and tactics, by means of which it began to win back lost ground step by step. From 1966 until the 19th Party Convention in 1969 the new programme was widely discussed. The main points were the role of the working class, the struggle against revisionism, questions of the anti-monopolist people's alliance, problems of minorities, youth, women, etc. In August 1968, after an interruption lasting several years, during which time only the "Worker", appearing weekly, and the weekly "People's World", which was circulated on the west coast, had appeared, the Communist Party was again able to begin production on a new communist daily newspaper—the Daily World. In February 1970, in the traditionally working-class stronghold of Chicago, the formation was announced of a new Marxist-Leninist youth organisation, the Young Workers' Liberation League (YWLL). The 21st Party Congress took place in Chicago in 1975. This was a very important event in the Party's history, marking a turning point to new possibilities for political work among the working people. In his report Gus Hall referred to the problems encountered and the progress made in recent years. The Congress adopted guidelines to govern the party's struggle during the 1976 electoral campaign and especially the creation of a broad anti-monopolist mass movement.

Having once more become an integral part of the left wing of all American democratic mass movements, the Party carried out valuable work in the unification of the progressive movements and in overcoming narrow-minded dogmatism and sectarian separatism, and its strategy was always directed towards preparing the way for a broad anti-monopolist people's coalition.

With the intention of attacking the repressive measures of the McCarthy period which had not yet been overcome and of securing its legalisation as a party, the CP of the USA has, in the past few years, repeatedly nominated its own candidates for elected positions on several levels. For the presidential elec-

tions of 1968 it nominated Charlene Mitchell, a member of the Political Commission of the Central Committee. Thus, for the first time, a Black woman contended for the highest position in the country. However, in that year the CP of the USA only succeeded in the States of Minnesota and Washington in overcoming the hurdles of an unjust and discriminatory system. Here, where relatively few signatures of support were needed for the participation of the communists in the elections, their candidates got onto the ballot papers. By 1972, not least as a result of the national campaign to save Angela Davis, which involved millions of people and led to a marked repudiation of anti-communism, the picture had changed significantly. In spite of threatened reprisals more than 400,000 US citizens now entered their names on the CP's electoral petitions. In several key states—in New York for example, where the number was 43,000—the party of the American proletariat made important breakthroughs. Even in Alabama, where any communist activity would have been answered with a public lynching a short time before, more than 6,200 people supported the CP's application. Although it was prevented by means of chicanery and the use of the above-mentioned special laws from achieving its aim of registering its candidates on the ballot papers of about 30 states, it improved its position considerably in comparison with 1968. This time, Communist Party candidates appeared on the ballot papers of 13 states. Thus, in several cases the "formally legitimate" anti-communist obstructions were surmounted, a big step in the strengthening of the legality of the CP of the USA. In the elections which followed, the American communists also used every possibility to champion the rights of the party. For the 1976 presidential elections the Communist Party put up Gus Hall and Jarvis Tyner as candidates for President and Vice-President respectively. Despite the fact that the Party was and still is subject to oppression, the great enthusiasm displayed by thousands of party-members and supporters as well as the growing authority of the party among working people led to a major success: in 19 states plus the District of Columbia the Party's candidates were officially put on the ticket. Even though in several other states the CP collected more than the necessary number of signatures, the courts decided against putting it on the ticket.

Since the beginning of the seventies the leaders of the party, who have also undertaken numerous extensive lecture tours, have repeatedly appeared on radio and television, although a free and fairly presented exposition of the proletarian point of view is unthinkable in the American mass media.

One cannot pass over the outstanding role played by the CP of the USA in the process of ideological clarification within the democratic movement. Traditionally a party with high standards in Marxist theory, it has fought consistently on the ideological front against the conceptions of adventurists, anarchists, opportunists and those indifferent to their class interests, as represented today in particular by some student groups, as well as the activities of Trotskyites, Maoists and the leaders of the Black Panther Party, which has shrunk to an insignificant sect.

While the CP of the USA made decisive contributions to the strengthening of the American peace movement during the Vietnam War it is now integrated into the struggle against the neutron bomb and for the ratification of Salt II, the important mass-movement of present-day USA. Furthermore it contributed similarly to the spread of clarity in the liberation movements of minorities discriminated against on the grounds of nationality or race. Uncompromising in face of the main danger—white chauvinism—at the same time the CP of the USA opposed those prophets of black racial separatism. They, with their proclamation of pseudo-revolutionary slogans, such as appeals for a “Guerilla Warfare in America’s concrete jungles”, and the propagation of a primitive and reactionary “African cultural traditionalism”, did as such harm to the liberation movement as the disciples of “Black Capitalism”, promoted by Nixon. The CP has demonstrated that Stokely Carmichael, Eldridge Cleaver, Huey P. Newton and LeRoi Jones were nothing but colourfully dressed extras on the stage of the political struggle.

The 21st Party Congress of the CPUSA warned against the growing danger of fascism also in the USA.

Although the separatist tendencies have not yet been overcome, there is an increasing understanding of the need for a united front of all oppressed people, of every colour, as advocated by the CP of the USA. The recognition that the Afro-American workers can only create the preconditions for their own liberation by means of a close class alliance with the rest of the US working population, is shared by truly progressive organisations of the Black population.

In accordance with fundamental needs, the theme “Class unity and anti-racist struggle” occupies an outstanding position in the curricula of the Marxist study centres, which have already been established by the CP of the USA in several states.

In the American labor union movement, too,—the most comprehensive force within the country’s democratic camp—a change which is increasingly undermining the positions of a corrupt bureaucracy integrated into the system and traitorous to class interests, is being extended step by step. The logical consequences of the intensified class struggle have meant that the arch-reactionary leadership of the AFL/CIO centred around the notorious anti-communist George Meany and his successors have not been able to maintain completely its umbrella association. Particularly among the Auto Workers, who do not belong to the AFL/CIO readiness to defend the rights of the proletariat has also grown. Thousands of hardfought strikes have buried the reformist talk of class harmony. Though it would be rash to talk of the CP of the USA as having already regained noteworthy influence on union development, the activities of many rank and file communists are not to be underestimated.

Our picture of the CP of the USA would be incomplete if we were not to refer to the enrichment of Marxist-Leninist theory and the important contribution that this party has made to the unity and integrity of the world communist movement. Its profoundly internationalist position not only mani-

feats itself in the consultations between the fraternal parties in Moscow, but also became particularly evident in August 1968, when the CP of the USA was one of the first Marxist-Leninist parties in a capitalist country to analyse in class terms and to give fundamental support to the measures taken for the protection of socialism in Czechoslovakia. The 22nd Party Convention in Detroit (1979) stressed proletarian internationalism once more. Later on the CPUSA came out in favour of the defence of the revolution in Afghanistan.

In a history lasting more than 56 years the Communist Party of the United States of America has travelled a difficult road full of struggles and marked by set-backs as well as progress. Under what are probably the most difficult conditions that a revolutionary party can ever face, it has never lowered the banner of communism. Its loyalty to the great cause, the clarity of its position and the devotion of its members are exemplary.

Appendix

Footnotes

- 1) Communist Party: General Secretary Charles E. Ruthenberg
Communist Labor Party: General Secretary Alfred Wagenknecht
Particular honour for the ideological consolidation of the party at that time is due to John Reed, the editor of the weekly publication "The Communist".

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